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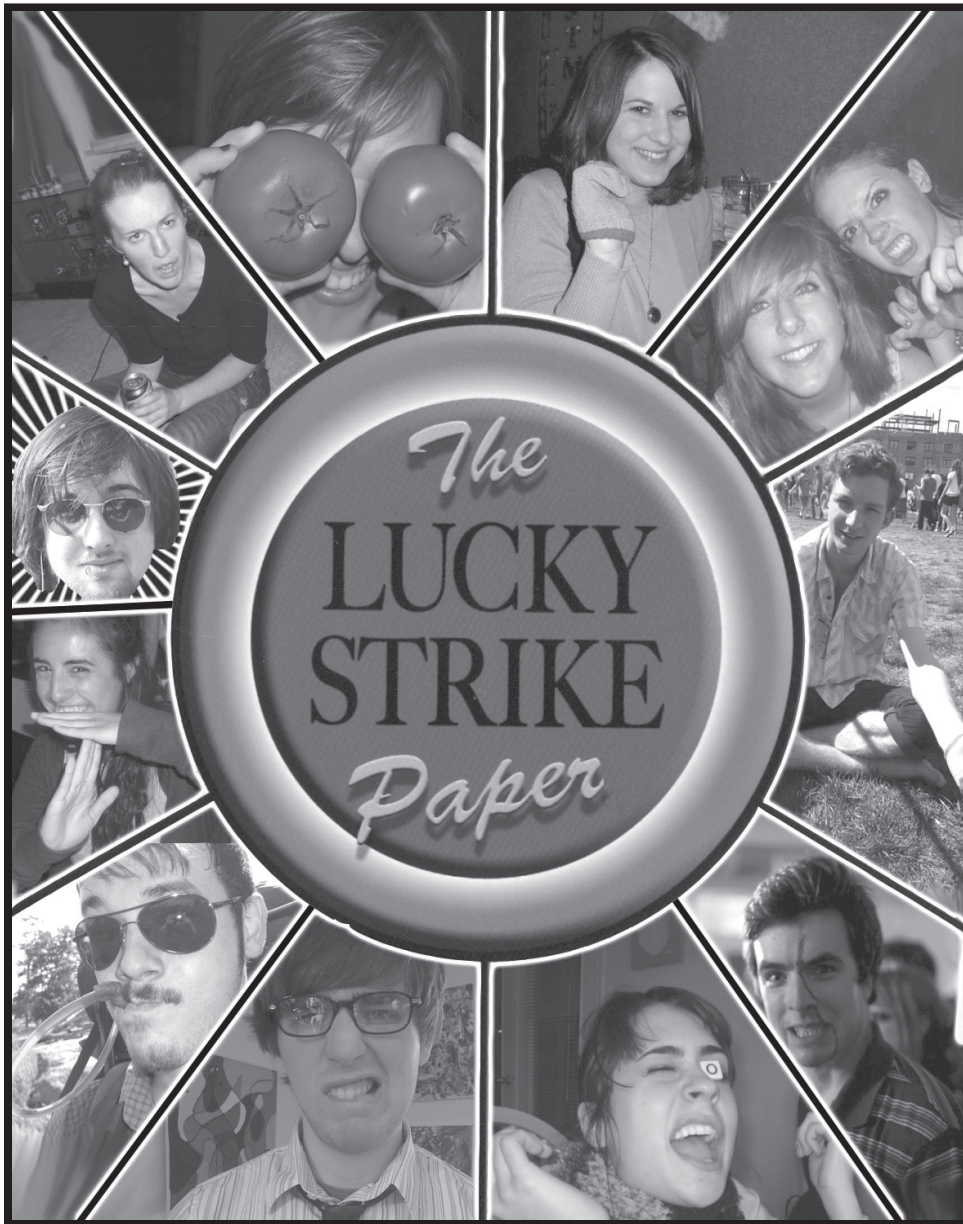
FOR THE
PROPRIETORS

THE PAPER

IT'S TOASTED

Fordham University's journal of news, analysis, comment, and review
February 10, 2010
Volume XXXIX, Issue I

THIS PACK... OR CIGARETTES
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Don't worry, Fordham, we totally quit smoking as our New Year's Resolution.

But the great thing about quitting is, you can always have one more.

We've got a new staff. Check us out on the left, and also see page 9.

Every issue online & blog posts about everything and nothing. Check us out online: fupaper.wordpress.com

Fan mail? Hate mail? Write to us!

the paper
c/o Office of Student Leadership
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So why not come down and write for us? We are a constantly evolving publication, and have been since 1972. And we try our best to second guess mainstream opinion and buck the system, even if there is no call to do so. But hey, writing isn't for everyone. Try reading a good book like *The Thing About Life Is That One Day You'll Be Dead*, by David Shields. You might just learn something.

our aim

the paper is Fordham University's student journal of news, analysis, comment, and review. Our aim is to give the Fordham community fresh insights on old issues, new thoughts on new issues, and information that other campus publications may not be able to report. We do not claim to be a newspaper of record – facts, figures, and dates. Instead, we focus on the Fordham student perspective, on thoughtful analysis, and on the comprehension of the full scope of events, rather than staggered and straight news coverage. In short, our emphasis is on the obvious and active role of the student writer in his or her work. We also aim to provide Fordham students a less fettered venue for expression, something they may not be able to find at other student publications.

Basically, if we make you laugh, piss you off, or move you in some way, then we're doing our job.

If you don't like it, shut your pie hole (or come write for us)!

"Awkward Valentine's Day Gifts"

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news

Faculty Fight for LDA Benefits

Fordham Faces its Own Health Care Struggles

by Emily Genetta
EXECUTIVE CO-EDITOR

While the Democrats continue their half-hearted struggle for healthcare reform on the national stage, Fordham faculty members are pushing harder than ever for fair coverage here on campus. Their fight has been going on since long before Obama took office – since 2005, in fact – and they aren't making weak compromises like our elected officials... partly because they can't. There is little to compromise on: either the University finally extends benefits to all legally-domiciled adults (LDAs), or it continues with its current discriminatory policy. As both sides acknowledge, LDA benefits are vitally important to LGBT faculty members in particular, though an LDA may not necessarily be a romantic partner. The term includes any adult who has a close relationship with a faculty member, has been living with him or her for at least six months, and is either financially interdependent with the faculty member or is the faculty member's tax dependent. Most adult recipients of healthcare benefits, though, are spouses – a clear disadvantage for same-sex couples, who can only marry in a few states and whose marriages, though recognized by New York, are not honored by Fordham.

Professor Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé, the Chair of Modern Languages and Literatures and a highly distinguished faculty member, has experienced this first-hand. "Throughout those twenty-three years [I have worked at Fordham] I have paid into our common faculty benefits package, helping to subsidize those benefits for my colleagues' spouses and children," he explained. "[...] And yet throughout those twenty-three years I have not been able to extend that same protection to my partner, now spouse, of thirty-

three years." Cruz-Malavé, a member of the Equality Committee of the Faculty Senate, has been working toward extending benefits to all LDAs since the issue was first introduced.

As Cruz-Malavé and many others have noted, progress has been slow. The Senate unanimously passed a resolution in favor of LDA benefits in April of 2006. For two years there was no answer, and so, in the fall of 2008, 432 faculty members and administrators signed a petition urging Father McShane to implement the resolution. The following spring (of 2009), McShane did release an official "Statement on LGBT Persons", which reads, in part:

As a Catholic university, Fordham embraces the Church's teaching that the God-given dignity of all human persons reflects the fact that "we are all from God and for God." It is in the context of this commitment of faith that the Church teaches that discrimination of any sort, including discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) persons, is a form of injustice.

The statement, however, did not address the request to extend benefits to all legally domiciled adults. Finally, at their November 9th meeting, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution "to call upon the President of the University to participate in an open discussion at the Senate's next meeting on the extension of benefits to the legally domiciled adults (LDAs) of faculty members." Michael Strom, president of PRIDE alliance, also drafted a letter urging McShane to attend the December 4th meeting. It was signed by officers of fifteen student organizations and states that

... as long as the University refuses to respect all families, the very concept of "Fordham family" is bankrupt.

Even as programs such as the Division of Student Affairs' Network of Support send messages of respect and acceptance, the University's stance on same-sex benefits leaves LGBT students questioning the authenticity of the University's commitment to creating a truly welcoming environment.

Still, Father McShane's attendance at the meeting remained largely uncertain until his arrival that night. After listening to Law School Professor Elizabeth Cooper's speech advocating for the adoption of LDA benefits and the following comments from Senate members, McShane addressed the Senate. He acknowledged that he had been waiting for the City Council to pass a resolution requiring such benefits, so that the University itself would not have to take a stance. According to the official Senate minutes, McShane stressed that "it is important that the University maintain respect for Catholic moral teaching and that our relations with the Archbishop remain good." He then referenced New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan's explicit support of the "Manhattan Declaration," a statement signed by Christians of many denominations, including many Church leaders. It reaffirms their stance against gay marriage and abortion and promises to use civil disobedience to protest such issues.

Finally, the Fordham community has an answer as to the administration's stance on LDA benefits. Unfortunately, the rationale behind it makes no sense. Firstly, there's the issue that "the University is at odds with its stated goals and objectives," as faculty member and PRIDE Alliance advisor Edward Cahill succinctly put it. Secondly, Fordham's hypocrisy is especially striking in that the college is "alone [in] not providing domestic partner

benefits or LDA benefits among colleges of its class," the Faculty Senate reported. Not only do NYU and Columbia offer such benefits, but so do a half-dozen Jesuit colleges, including Georgetown. Fordham's D.C. sister-school illustrates the third reason why Fordham's policy is nonsensical: the university avoided conflict with the D.C. Archbishop even though he is also a signatory of the "Manhattan Declaration," because *the document says nothing about benefits for same sex partners*; it only expresses opposition to gay marriage. With their adoption of LDA benefits, Georgetown, as their official paper *The Hoya* reports, actually "serves as an example for the D.C. archdiocese."

It remains unclear why Fordham is not following Georgetown in its example of social justice. In response to a request for comment from Father McShane, the author received an e-mail from Director of Communications Bob Howe stating that "the University's position on benefits for Legally Domiciled Adults is part of an ongoing conversation with the faculty and its leadership."

In the meantime, the consequences for Fordham University and the members of its community are severe. The lack of benefits puts Fordham at a significant disadvantage in terms of hiring new faculty members. "I don't think it's a problem of retention, [but] we will lose a tremendous number of hours trying to find people," PRIDE Advisor Professor Cahill comments. As Elizabeth Cooper explained at the December 4th meeting, "[This difficulty in recruiting staff] is likely to imperil the achievement of Fordham's quest for academic excellence..." In terms of human costs, the lack of LDA benefits is even more pronounced. States the Senate, "The economic hard-

ship for our faculty, although not outlined in [this] report, is considerable," especially in the current recession.

Perhaps even more devastating is the message it sends to the LGBT community on campus. Professor Cruz-Malavé remarks, "It not only places an added financial burden on faculty; it also damages the morale of faculty." PRIDE President Michael Strom comments about the message it sends to students: "As an openly gay student at Fordham, I just can't feel welcome or respected while people like me are being blatantly discriminated against." Thankfully, change may be coming soon. Professor Cahill believes that LDA benefits will be granted within the next few years. "There has been so much positive change at Fordham regarding the LGBT community," he states. Furthermore, "[the LDA policy] is actually on the table now." Indeed, at the end of their December 4th meeting, after Father McShane had left, the Faculty Senate directed the Salary & Benefits Committee to draft a formal proposal for the enactment of LDA benefits. In the meantime, LGBT members of the Fordham community and their straight allies are left dealing with a painful reality, as eloquently described by Professor Cruz-Malavé at the end of his interview:

"We all like to think that our jobs are not only a source of personal accomplishment and self-worth, but that they also allow us to form solid familial bonds in order to protect those whom we love. What is most painful about Fordham's refusal to extend benefits is to feel that one cannot do this, which most people take for granted – that one cannot protect those to whom one is committed in bonds of love."

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Rethinking New York's School System

As NYC Strengthens its Commitment to Education, Who Gets Left Behind?

by Marisa Carroll
FEATURES EDITOR

This week, 5,898 envelopes are finding their way into eighth graders' mailboxes across the five boroughs. The words "NYC Department of Education" stamped in the upper left corner, the envelopes contain letters of acceptance to New York's specialized high schools. Selective public schools like Bronx High School of Science, High School of American Studies at Lehman College and six others admit students based on the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) administered every fall. The test covers reasoning, reading comprehension, and math skills ranging from simple computation to probability and geometry.

Students accepted at these schools have access to resources unequivocally better than those of their local public schools. Unfortunately, most of the Bronx's poorest students have little hope of being accepted. Only eight percent of Hispanic and seven percent of black students who took the SHSAT were accepted to any of the eight schools this year. Considering that 35% of Asian and 31% of white applicants were accepted, the taste left in most minority residents' mouths is unbearably sour.

This discrepancy is nothing new for the selective enrollment

schools. For decades, community leaders have called for a more holistic admission process that takes more than just a student's test score into account. "The statistics clearly show that black New Yorkers are being shut out," City Council education committee chairman Robert Jackson told the New York Times in 2006. "If we're looking to be inclusive in the greatest city in the world, I would think that the chancellor and every educator has to ask themselves why is this, and what do we need to do to reverse that. Is it institutional racism or is it something else?"

Consider the Department of Education's claim that a deep understanding of the English language is necessary to succeed in a selective high school. While I understand Mayor Bloomberg is not about to stand up and declare English a dead language, this policy robs the Bronx's 52.6% non-native English-speaking population of the opportunity to thrive. For decades, these ESL students have typically ended up at the poorly performing, large neighborhood schools.

As of late, a new dimension has been added to this placement process. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has stressed a "school turnaround"

plan in which failing or underperforming schools are "turned around" by federal specialists. For Bloomberg, this process has focused on shutting down a large, underperforming school and replacing it with a few smaller schools—often within



the same building. "Turnaround specialists" re-train some staff members; otherwise, new, more qualified teachers are hired. Since 2002, turnaround has resulted in 91 New York school closings. Earlier this month, education officials voted to close another nine Bronx high schools.

On the surface, this process provides hope for those unable to test into schools like Bronx Science. Department of Education reports reflect that new charter schools have an average graduation rate of 75%, a staggering 15% higher than the city average and almost 30% higher than that of Christopher Colum-

bus High, one of the Bronx high schools recently closed. More charter school teachers have advanced degrees than their large-school predecessors and, as the New School's Center for New York City Affairs reported in July, the opening of over 200 schools in the past five years has increased families' choices dramatically.

In theory, school turnaround provides a fresh choice for the students of New York. However, as is so often the case, the reality is far less sunny. Students originally disenfranchised by the New York school system

continue to be overlooked and underprovided for. School crowding issues are intensifying as the large, underperforming schools the city has yet to close fill with ESL and disabled students. The same fate befalls countless students whose parents are not well-informed on high school options, whether due to being overworked, not present in the child's life, or simply unable to read city pamphlets and websites. According to the Center for New York City Affairs, students forced to decide on their own more often than not make the wrong choice: their school years end up plagued by 90 minute com-

muting, insufficient programs tailored to their needs, and cultural differences that hinder students' ability to excel, learn, or even graduate.

So where does this leave New York's youth? The city's attempts to revitalize its schools are in many ways commendable, but underlie a complete lack of consideration for those who need it most. Groups like the Center for New York City Affairs call for immediate support for schools collecting "default" students, particularly those floundering schools that may face closings in upcoming years. They also critique only creating small high schools to replace those that close, encouraging the revitalization of large and mid-sized schools that can provide more opportunities for special needs students. Finally, they urge the Department of Education to restructure their acceptance policies for specialized high schools, giving a chance to those who may not have attended grammar schools capable of preparing them for the SHSAT exam. Essentially, they preach the not-at-all radical agenda that casting aside the children of immigrants, the uneducated and the ever-increasing unemployed must not be acceptable collateral damage in the city's war on dropout rates. Hopefully Bloomberg hears their call.

JESUS RIFLES

U.S. Military Removeth Biblical References from Gun Sights

by Sean Kelly
EXECUTIVE CO-EDITOR

For decades now, Michigan-based arms contractor Trijicon has maintained a practice of inscribing Biblical references on their gun sights (used by the U.S., Australian and British militaries) at the end of all the serial numbers. Up until recently, both the military and the media have ignored this fact as faithfully as ignoring your drunk Uncle Harry at a family dinner. However, at some point, Uncle Harry will inevitably bring up politics or religion at the table after swilling nearly two bottles of White Zinfandel, and someone will have to deal with it.

Well, at the family dinner that is the U.S. military-industrial complex, Uncle Harry just launched into an inebriated theology lesson, and the kids are starting to get scared. On Thursday, January 21, U.S. Military chief General David Petraeus released a statement describing Trijicon's bizarre and wholly creepy practice as "disturbing" and "a serious concern." These sentiments were echoed by Australian Defense Minister John

Faulkner, who has been working to find ways to remove the references on optics currently in use in the field, and by the Church of England, who fears that the references may suggest religious motivation for military action and reflect poorly on all Christian churches. Additionally, the U.S. Marine Corps and foreign clients of Trijicon alike have expressed concern that the ostensible Christian message communicated by these references could give the impression of American soldiers being religious "crusaders."

The Bible references, which appear in raised lettering on all M4 and M16 rifle optics produced by the company, appear in a format that keeps them almost hidden among the stock numbers of the sights. For example, a reference to John 8:12 (a fairly common one on the sights) appears tagged on to the rest of the numbers as JN8:12, as does second

Corinthians 4: 6 as 2COR4:6. The fact that these references were so heavily integrated into the serial numbers to the point of being difficult to find makes the company's practice all the more disconcerting in a different sort of way. It raises a multitude of questions regarding the motivation behind adding these

which the equipment would be employed?

Though there have been no definitive answers provided for these inquiries, the company's swift and obsequious response suggests that even if there is no ulterior motive to their actions, they are at least monumentally embarrassed by the veritable



public relations maelstrom generated in the past month. Upon catching wind of disapproval, Trijicon president Stephen Bindon, whose father both founded the company and introduced the practice of adding the references to serial numbers, announced that his company would voluntarily (or as voluntarily as is possible in the face of PR ruin) halt the practice of inscribing these references and would provide kits for removal of references appearing on firearms currently in use. Bindon added that all

removal options would be made available to all foreign militaries with which Trijicon does business. Obviously, when facing such a high degree of scrutiny from the public and from the military leaders of three major world powers, any company not run by a suicidal maniac would acquiesce to almost anything demanded of them, whether it be removing Bible references on gun sights or carrying David Petraeus' golf clubs for the next 6 months. And, indeed, Trijicon would most likely cease to exist as a successful arms contractor had they not promised to bend over backwards to accommodate the demands of everyone that they do business. However, the fact that this oddly superstitious practice continued uninhibited for several decades before being noticed (or, probably more accurately, before it was realized that the practice is potentially problematic) does seem a bit strange, and leads one to wonder what the company would be up to had military leaders not spoken out against the references.

ObamaTube

The President Speaks to His People in the Age of the Internet

by Sean Bandfield
NEWS CO-EDITOR

On February 1st, President Obama boldly went where no black president has gone before: the internets. Though the President has previously used the internet to respond to questions from concerned citizens and a questionable population of potheads, he sat down with some dude named Steve Grove to address the tough issues and beam sagely wisdom to viewers the web over. Bypassing traditional network news platforms, Obama's broadcast was sent out exclusively through YouTube — much to the delight of us Millennials and all those old people who shouldn't even be on the internet in the first place.

The Vlogger in Chief spent half an hour taking the public's questions, some submitted in writing and others entered as videos. The questions were selected from thousands of entries and were chosen to represent the most popular concerns while simultaneously featuring the fewest number of vicious obscenities. Professional mumbler Steve Grove presented the questions to Obama, and the

Doritos-eating, naked home audience was assured that the President had never heard the questions that were about to stumble clumsily out of Mr. Grove's mouth. This was politicizing and pussyfooting at its most exciting; anything could happen — or be given to the government to make happen.

The first question came in the form of a video from a group of people who obviously hate freedom, collectively asking the President when health care reform would finally become a reality. Obama replied by saying that "we came extremely close" to passing legislation for reform, and expressed his hope that "we can get this done not just a year from now, but soon."

Responding to questions about small businesses and the state of the economy, the President explained that his administration expanded the Small Business Administration loan portfolio by nearly 70% and cut out other costs and procedures to provide business owners with more money in shorter time. Obama emphasized the importance of small businesses in reviving the economy, stating, "If

we can get small businesses back on their feet, then that's going to go a long way towards bringing the unemployment rate down."

In order to "lighten things up," Grove introduced a round of questions called "Good Idea, Bad Idea" in which the President could listen to suggestions provided by citizens and then criticize them ruthlessly. During this Animaniacs-worthy segment, the President commented on the usually "bad idea" of privatizing struggling government agencies, the "good idea" of offering incentives for healthy eating, exercise, and other preventative health measures, and the "good idea" of encouraging clean energy by mandating that all "federal operations are employing the best possible clean energy technology." The President remarked that companies are beginning to realize that it's in their best interest to utilize alternative energy technology, and he didn't dismiss the questioner's suggestion to equip federal, state, and school buildings with solar panels — which could potentially transform the White



House into the much more hip and eco-friendly Black and Shiny House.

When netizens asked Obama about his plans for the War on Terror, the President did away with vague generalizations, replacing them with a refreshing specificity: "We are at war against a very specific group — Al Qaeda and its extremist allies that have metastasized around the globe... That is our target, and that is our focus." Obama went on to explain that, in addition to countering Al Qaeda militarily, other tactics must be employed: providing economic help to vulnerable countries like Yemen and Pakistan, working with the "overwhelming majority of Muslims" who renounce terrorism, and encouraging different routes for people to diplomatically voice dissent (Obama confessed that "we haven't done

as good of a job on that front").

Obama's Q&A session was representative of his consistent use of the internet to connect directly with the American public. Obama has made such a practice of releasing video updates and utilizing the web that comparisons between his messages and FDR's fireside chats are already getting old. The President expressed his hope to make a regular affair of having such interviews, saying that taking questions directly from citizens "gives me great access to all the people out there with wonderful ideas." While Obama's continued YouTubing might say as much about the shifting character of the media as it does about his own cultural awareness, one thing remains certain — it beats C-SPAN.

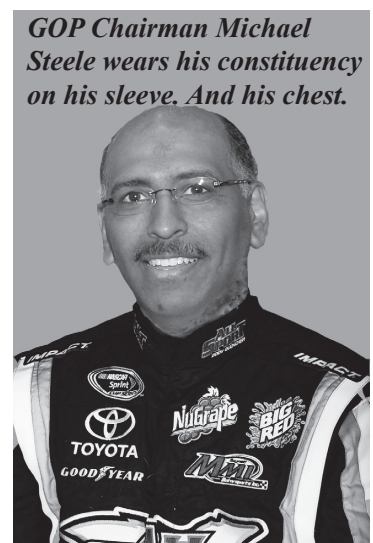
This Candidate Brought to You by Exxon-Mobil: Supreme Court Ruling Allows Unlimited Corporate Spending on Political Campaigns

by Sarah Madges
EARWAX EDITOR

My reputable dictionary widget defines a corporation as "a company or group of people authorized to act as a single entity (legally a person) and recognized as such in law." According to Mark Achbar's 2003 release *The Corporation*, (featuring intellectuals like Noam Chomsky and Naomi Klein) however, a corporation is better defined as an artificial creation to produce profit, or, less euphemistically, as the Frankenstein monster of our age. The latter metaphor comes from the fact that, historically speaking, corporations were set up to serve the public. Accordingly, the U.S. Supreme Court gave them the same rights they offered that public, starting with the 1886 case of Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad, which decided that the word "person" in the Fourteenth Amendment could include corporations. However, as the corporation is also legally bound to pander in favor of their shareholders' interests (even before the public it's supposed to serve), the American public has become an externality. Milton Friedman describes this as the effect of a transaction between two parties on a third party who is not involved in said transaction (i.e., the involved parties don't deal with the problems created; we do). Our function as an externality is especially evi-

dent after the Supreme Court's 5-4 ruling on January 21st, *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*, which overturned century-old restrictions on corporations and interest groups from using their deep pockets to elect or defeat political candidates. Ruling No. 08-205 rescinded two precedents: *Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce* (1990), which restricted corporate spending to support or oppose political candidates, and *McConnell v. Federal Election Commission* (2003), which upheld part of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 through its moratorium on the corporate-backed transmission of "electioneering communications" paid for in the 30 days before a presidential primary and in the 60 days before the general elections. The conservative members argued, however, that this override was necessary to give corporations and unions their First Amendment rights to political speech that the government can't restrict. As the late Howard Zinn summed up, the Supreme Court simply put a fig leaf of legality over the historical fact that corporations have always run our elections. Among the many less stoic and more infuriated people, Rep. Alan Grayson (D-FL) immediately whirled into action, claiming, "You won't have any more senators from Kansas or Oregon, you'll have senators from

Cheekies and Exxon. Maybe we'll have to wear corporate logos like NASCAR drivers." Dissenting Justice John Paul Stevens added his condemnation that the Court compounded its offense "by implicitly striking down a great many state laws as well." He's referring to the fact that the states that ex-



PLICITLY prohibit independent corporate expenditures now have to amend their constitutions to adapt to federal law, and any states wanting to prohibit corporate political spending in the future can't. This corporate cash won't be spread evenly, either—states like Ohio and Florida, where races are more competitive and expensive, will see the biggest incursion of currency.

Rep. Grayson responded to democracy's entropy with six

campaign finance bills such as the Business Should Mind Its Own Business Act and the Corporate Propaganda Sunshine Act (I'm not making these up—sign on to SaveDemocracy.net if you want to lend support of his bills). The first of these slaps a 500 percent excise tax on corporate spending on elections, while the second demands that businesses disclose in SEC filings money used to influence public opinion, rather than to promote their products. Grayson's active concern that corporations like Exxon will drop a mere tenth of their budget (which would cover Obama, McCain, and every House Representative and Senator's campaign bills from the last election) to eliminate political enemies has been echoed by Democrats and Republicans alike. All the same, reforming campaign finance laws is arduous when both of these parties (especially Republicans) receive hefty sums of corporate cash. Grand Old Party (emphasis on old) members Michael Steele and Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, along with Sen. Mitch McConnell from Kentucky have praised the verdict as a "defense of free speech" ("free speech" being code for "cash from special interests"), and Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN) said of the ruling, "Freedom won today in the Supreme Court." Obama, on the other hand, thinks there was a different winner, call-

ing it "a major victory for big oil, Wall Street banks...and the other powerful interests that... drown out the voices of everyday Americans." Perhaps Grayson isn't too harsh when he dubs the Republican Party a wholly owned subsidiary of corporate America, though there are a few like McCain and Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME) who don't want to be future Congressmen of Wal-Mart like the rest of the Supreme Court's superfans.

Along with the aforementioned politicians, many others are conjuring up ideas to avoid this fate, including Fran Korten of the socially conscious publication, *Yes! Magazine*, who suggested ten ideas to limit or reverse the Court's ruling. Adding on to Grayson's bills, Korten proposed that we amend the Constitution so that corporations do not have the rights of human beings, require shareholders to approve political spending (a practice Britain has required since 2000), provide federal financing through the Pass the Fair Elections Now Act (backed by organizations like MoveOn.org, the NAACP, and even Ben & Jerry's), and give qualified candidates equal amounts of free broadcast air time for political messages. Without support or enforcement, these are just pokes at a comatose democracy. But who knows? Maybe she'll wake up.

FAKER THAN TRUTH

by Sean Kelly, Alex Orf, and Alex Gibbons
STAFF LIARS

WASHINGTON, D.C. ~ At a press conference held Thursday at their national headquarters in Washington, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Cute Pets) publicly spoke out against what spokesdog Truffles, a 9 year old Westie Terrier, called “pervasive and gross misuse” of the phrase “good dog”. “We at this organization feel that this uplifting pleasantry has entirely lost its meaning after years of arbitrary and improper usage” said Truffles to reporters. Added Truffles, “if everyone is special, then no one is”. The organization has announced plans for a national advertising campaign promoting positive reinforcement only for the exercise of “true canine values” such as retrieving thrown objects, snuggling, and consuming one’s own vomit before the owner has a chance to clean it up.

-SPK

NASHVILLE, TN ~ After her rousing National Tea Part Convention speech declaring that “America is ready for another revolution,” Sarah Palin shocked the world when she led the riled-up mass of Tea Partiers in a “populist revolt” through the streets of Nashville. Wielding torches and a variety of garden tools “for that old timey feel,” the crowd ambled ill-manneredly toward the Berry Field National Guard Base near the Nashville International Airport amidst shouts of, “Spirit of ‘76!” and “End the Obama Reign of Terror!” The “revolt” proceeding for seven blocks until one Partier, upon asking a policeman for directions to the base, realized that it was several dozen miles away. Daunted by the long distance, the Partiers skulked back to their posh hotel discontentedly, where they re-gathered in the conference hall to shake their fists at a projected image of President Obama until dawn. Most news sources and government officials are unsure of what to make of the event, though Fox News has dubbed it “A triumph of the American Spirit in the face of tyranny.”

-AO

AMHERST, MA ~ Following allegations of hazing and indecent conduct on university grounds, an investigation of the Delta Lambda Kappa house at UMASS Amherst revealed that all members of the fraternity were reportedly “all really nice guys.”

“Everyone here is really nice to me,” said John Wilson, 18, as he stood balancing on one leg in front of the university’s library brandishing a large sign that read “I Love Men.” “All the brothers at the house are caring and really cool,” he continued.

Patrick Stenson, the president of Delta Lambda Kappa, attributed accusations that the fraternity partook in acts of hazing to a rival and jealous fraternity house. “Those douchebags over at Beta house are responsible for this,” said Stenson, as he applied a coating of honey to the back of a freshman pledge who hung upside down from a tree outside the house. “There just jealous cause our parties are hot, our chicks are loose, and our bros are the best.”

UMASS Amherst President Jack M. Wilson attested to the commendable nature of the Delta Lambda Kappa house. “Many of the members are legacies,” said Wilson, who according to a message spray painted on his office door is “a total homo.” “They come from very distinguished Massachusetts families, and we’re very proud to have them in our community,” he said later as he stomped out a burning paper bag that smelled of feces.

-AG

What Happened in Massachusetts One Politically-Challenged Individual’s Recollection of the Scott Brown Election

by Alex Gibbons
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

About a week before Massachusetts residents went to the polls to vote for their next state senator last month, Scott Brown’s giant mug flashed across my television screen. There he was, Mr. Brown, pulling up to a cheering crowd in his black pick-up truck, waving and smiling and all that jazz. It was a day later that my friend told me of his father’s declaration that Scott Brown was “gettin’ his vote, cause he’s just a normal guy who does normal stuff and drives a truck.”

I was previously aware of Mr. Brown’s existence. My self-proclaimed independent parents, especially my paw, had been talking about him all week. It was Scott Brown, the young gun (51), up against the Democrats. Well, one Democrat... one Libertarian, Martha Coakley and Joseph L. Kennedy respectively.

Coakley was Brown’s main competitor. To say that the Attorney General felt entitled to the position would be an understatement. Hell, the chair had previously belonged to Teddy Kennedy, just about the liberal-est corpse in America. Most of the Bay State was convinced the race was going to be a shoe-in for the Democrats.

That is, of course, before Scott Brown’s big ol’ mug showed up on my television screen. After the commercial aired showing Scott Brown and his workin’ man’s pickup truck, another, more effective Brown campaign spot appeared. The ad showed Brown walking around South Boston aka “Southie,” a low-income, predominately Irish part of the city.

“We’re in Southie!” exclaimed Brown on camera, his best Baawston accent on show. The spot then went on to show Brown walking around Baawston, greeting various people whom he met on the street. “Hiya! I’m Scaaat Brahwn, ‘am runnin’ fah Senatah ah this heah state,” says Brown to a Bostonian, who smiles and shakes his hand and says something nice about Brown in a similar accent,

completely incomprehensible to anybody south of New Haven.

I’ll admit, that last exchange was heavily paraphrased. But the point is still the same, dammit. Running an ad like that in Massachusetts is campaigning-101. This is a state that idolizes Boston, where everyone considers themselves a little Irish.

People started really talking about Brown maybe two weeks before Election Day. All the while, I don’t recall seeing one

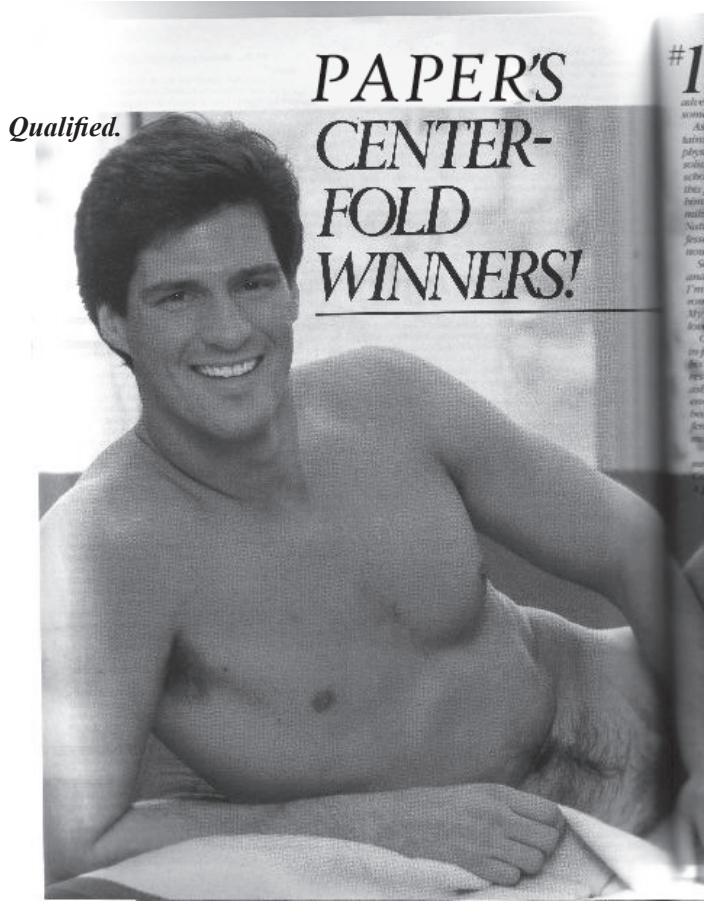
heavily of labor households.

Shortly after Brown’s election I sat in my friend’s van discussing the events of his campaign and what it meant for American politics for the next few years. We both agreed, right there, that President Obama was, in our minds, fucked (this is before he schooled House Republicans in a live q&a session on c-span). The problem, we thought, was that Brown would effectively kill the health care bill, subsequently killing any chance of Obama being reelected in 2012.

“I’m gonna have to cross over to the dark-side,” said my friend. “If there’s no chance that Obama can win in 2012, we’ve got to make sure we get a decent Republican up there...otherwise we’ll get stuck with President Palin.” President Obama’s bravado displayed during his State of the Union and the aforementioned C-Span session was revitalizing, and the situation doesn’t look as bleak anymore, but the prospect of a President Palin, who is being primed and fluffed as we speak, is frightening. Obama needs to have a banger of a presidency to ensure such an outcome is wholly avoided.

But what of Brown? Even during the senate race there was talk about a possible presidential bid in 2012. Of course, like any responsible politician, Brown denied such rumors. What is clear, however, is how important Senator Brown now is to the Republican Party. The GOP now has two rock star personalities to pontificate and shit-talk. Brown is a bit tamer than Palin, but his appeal seems to gear towards populist zeal, something Conservatives have been warming up to lately.

I’d be willing to say that if the Junior Senator from Massachusetts played his cards right, he’d be considered by the GOP a more perfect candidate than Palin. He’s a helluva talker, great with crowds, and drives a large truck. Somewhere, in some graveyard, William F. Buckley’s is popping a posthumous woody.



piece of Coakley campaign material. I know there were some, somewhere, but any campaigning was scarce and limited compared to Brown’s. It was a bad play. It made Coakley, as I’ve said before, appear as though she felt entitled to Kennedy’s seat, setting Brown up for some primo populist face time. “It’s not the Kennedy’s seat, it’s not the Democrats’ seat, it’s the people’s seat,” said Brown in a January debate.

On January 19, 2010, Brown became the first Republican the represent Massachusetts since 1972. He pushed for an early swearing in, which he got, on February 4, forcing speculation that the Senator was anxious to do the Republican Party’s bidding as early as possible. Brown offers the Republicans their 41st vote, enough to kill the health care bill and block the appointment of Craig Becker, whom Republicans loathe, to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). If Brown puts up the 41st vote, filibustering Becker’s nomination, it will be hard for the junior senator to deny being a tool for party interest, especially as his base consisted

RESILIENT AS ALWAYS

The People of Haiti, Post-Earthquake

by Kaitlin Campbell
ARTS CO-EDITOR

Finally – after hours of not hearing from him, and only having the terrifying images from CNN as an information link to Haiti – the call went through and I heard my dad’s voice: he was alive. Knowing that in seconds the call would be dropped I needed to be urgent and careful with my words: “Are you OK? Is Fr. Tom OK? Is Nelson OK?” and he was able to confirm those three things. I was incredibly relieved.

Nelson Jean Lafette is the Haitian chief-of-staff of Hands Together, an organization my dad and Fr. Tom Hagan founded in 1986 which focuses on providing outreach in the four basic areas of education, sustainable development, nutrition/feeding and emergency needs to the people of Haiti.

I met Nelson eight years ago on my first trip to Haiti – as I was equally as shy as he, we only exchanged smiles and confusing laughter until I learned enough Creole on my visits years later to actually talk to him.

Nelson was born in Cite Soleil, a garbage-laden square-mile slum of 400,000 in Port-au-Prince. His childhood playgrounds were mountains of trash and dank open sewage canals that he and other children shared with pigs and goats.

But Nelson has something most Haitians don’t: a job. And in a slum where desperation

he’s lost another daughter and his wife by natural disaster.

“He pointed to the rubble and just said, ‘My daughter and my daughter’s mother.’” My dad told me. “He just stared, and then started crying.”

The struggles and pain of Nelson’s life are echoed all over Haiti today – and yet those struggles and pains that exist for so many more Haitians now have been more or less the way of life for the residents of the Cite Soleil slum for decades.

There is a tremendous resilience, though, in the people of Cite Soleil, that has confused and inspired my dad and Fr. Tom in their years of working in the slum. In this respect, from Fr. Tom’s perspective, the earthquake has changed little in the faces of the residents there.

“When I go to Cite Soleil now as I do every day I see few tears,” he told me. Fr. Tom’s daily visits to Cite Soleil have drastically changed since the earthquake – where schools were rubble and chaos exists. The HT headquarters was leveled in the quake, and the main body of the organization sleeps every night together in tents, in the demolished lot that used to be their house.

Now, Hands Together’s main focus for relief consists of setting up Haitian leadership teams in 10 designated outreach zones, each with a leadership Captain to run the established bases for outreach at campus locations where organized lo-

but they have a strength that is remarkable. I am humbled by them and privileged to be with them.”

Fr. Tom has always commented that “Haiti’s greatest economy is really their poverty.” He refers to the hundreds

of non-profit organizations and charities scattered across the country that fill in for the weak and fragmented government which rules over a population in which 80% of its citizens live in abject poverty. Even more than before, these organizations can “trip on each other,” as my dad has remarked, and he’s always expressed the need for a certain “learning to un-learn” when working in Haiti.

Fr. Tom reminds himself of this un-learning especially now: “I realize too that the longer I am here the less I know. I really could not speak with much authority about what will happen with the government or even what would be the best way to help the people in the face of this disaster. I also struggle a great deal even being here. I feel strongly that we can do a great deal of harm with the best intentions when we begin to be the benefactor.”



never have grown and operated so efficiently even in the most violent times. During the violent gang uprisings when Cite Soleil was under constant strain from conflicts between UN Forces and gang leaders, Hands Together’s schools remained open. When the gang leaders had blocked off all ways of getting in or out of the slum, and the residents within were without food, water, or support, Hands Together was able to peacefully deliver the same emergency food packages daily in the worst areas. Their method is that shared with the Missionaries of Charity, Jesuit Refugee Services, and Catholic Relief Services: to let the Haitians help their own people, as they know how to do.

“The people living in Cite Soleil experienced and appreciated the persistence of our efforts to improve their communities and slowly began to believe that we would not abandon them in times of adversity. This strengthening of the fragile bond between us and the desperate, frightened people living in the slum has helped us weather the storms of violence, theft, and corruption that have wreaked such havoc on this horrible area.” My dad wrote this years ago, and it applies more than ever to their efforts in Haiti right now.

It is impossible to run any project in Cite Soleil without going through the gang leaders, as they act as community leaders in the 14 “zones” that the slum has been casually divided into. Though the bonds with the people may be weakened by the misunderstandings that arise

in confronting their mysterious, violent lifestyles, they are strengthened by the unified desire to help the Haitian people – as in the case of Nelson, enough to make this desire his entire life’s work.

It was because of their relationship with these gang leaders that Hands Together was able to distribute emergency relief in the midst of the violent uprisings, and operate their schools. It was because of their relationship with the gang leaders that they were able to construct the schools in the first place. From the beginning, it was through the gang leaders they went to secure plots of land –they needed the approval of the local zone leader before continuing the project. And it only makes sense –who would know the needs of the people better?

Now – with the same dependence on the Haitian community that has been apparent since Hands Together’s creation, Fr. Tom expresses the need to “pull back and let our leaders and captains deal with how to divide up aid and support” as together they deliver four to five truckloads of fresh water to Soleil and Delmas daily, distributing family care packages donated by BND containing 25 kilos of rice, beans, sardines and oil. He also emphasized the need for them to utilize their back hoe loader and dump truck to remove the debris from their residence and ready the land for a new residence and headquarters. In addition, the U.S. Military has collaborated with Hands Together work with U.S. military in their two-week campaign to distribute 42 tons of food a day in Cite Soleil, using three outreach zones for that and two zones for daily medical clinics. They are also collecting medical supplies and tents to distribute to homeless families.

There is physical destruction everywhere in Haiti right now, but my dad expressed that “as we [Hands Together] took stock of what remained we found that the earthquake did not destroy our relationships with the people of Cite Soleil and Port-au-Prince,” and these are more important items than their headquarters, schools, trucks and supplies.

My dad is OK, Fr. Tom is OK and Nelson is OK – and thank God, as they need each other and the support from their community to manifest an incredible amount of relief.



feeds jealousy and rage, a job can be a dangerous commodity. Gangs control Cite Soleil, and Nelson’s natural resourcefulness and creativity almost naturally led him to become a gang member until Fr. Tom offered him another way.

In 2001, gang members showed their contempt for Nelson’s going to work for Fr. Tom by murdering his 3-year-old daughter when they arrived at his house to kill him and did not find him there.

Now, less than a month ago,

cal residents, parents of school children and students to clean up the area and build makeshift walls around the base. Hands Together coordinates distribution of water, food, and hygiene kits from these bases. Without the support of their “Haiti Family,” Fr. Tom would not be able to handle the enormous burden of conducting these emergency efforts himself.

“During these very difficult days I find myself really loving these people,” he told me. “They continue to suffer greatly

that exist are privately owned and many times run as small businesses, charging tuition and service fees in a place where sometimes even the smallest price cannot be met. Beginning with a four-room “bare-foot” school, Hands Together has over the years created the largest network of schools in the Cite Soleil slum, providing 8,000 children with education and daily meals before the January earthquake. In exchange for tuition and expenses, parents can work at each campus – in

10 Little Christians

Haitian Authorities Arrest Would-Be “Missionaries” Despite Best - Or Worst - Intentions

by Alex Orf
NEWS CO-EDITOR

The short history of the 21st century has shown that natural disasters cause a vast outpouring of humanitarian sentiment and desire to help. The 2004 tsunami in Indonesia, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2006, and now the earthquake in Haiti have all motivated the world community to respond with whatever form of aid it can give. And while efforts to help almost always have the best intentions, the lack of organization immediately following such an event can make it difficult to know what is best for the affected area. As a result, an uninformed humanitarian effort may end up doing more harm than good. Such may be the case with the ten Americans arrested at Haiti's border on Saturday, January 30 for trying to move 33 Haitian children into the Dominican Republic.

The group, mostly from a Baptist church congregation in Idaho, claim to have been on a “Haitian Orphan Rescue Mission.” They planned to move 100 orphaned children into the Dominican Republic to set up an orphanage where the children would be cared for, edu-

cated, and eventually adopted by American families. However, the group neglected even to ask for, much less receive, any kind of approval from the Haitian government – which, since the January 12 earthquake, has required Prime Minister Max Bellerive to personally authorize the removal of any child from Haiti.

On February 4, the ten Americans were charged with child abduction and criminal conspiracy by a Haitian court in the first case tried since the earthquake. At press time, the case is in judicial review, but should the Haitian government decide to continue with the trial, the Americans face up to 15 years in jail. However, the charges indicate the ambiguity of the case – human trafficking, a much graver offense, was left out by the prosecution.

It is difficult to tell if the Americans are truly earnest missionaries with a naïve understanding of the situation in which they put themselves, or just very stupid criminals. Group leader Laura Silsby consulted with child protection officials and the Dominican government before attempting to move the children, but despite their warnings that she needed

the Haitian government's approval, she continued with her operation without government consent. Further, some parents of the children the Americans were moving have said that Silsby promised to take care of and educate their children, but never mentioned adoption.

The problem of orphanages and child trafficking in Haiti has existed long before the earthquake. Many children in the hundreds of Haitian orphanages are not actually orphans; impoverished parents unable to care for their children leave them in orphanages until they have the means to care for them again. The quality of these

orphanages ranges from well-funded international institutions like the Austrian-based SOS Children's Villages, where the 33 children are currently staying, to dilapidated one-room buildings, some of which are suspected of selling the children left in their care as domestic servants for wealthy Haitian families or as agricultural workers on Dominican farms. Exactly

how many children are sold is unclear, but Unicef estimates the number in the tens of thousands per year.

Acknowledging the reality of child trafficking, the Haitian government has been very concerned since the earthquake that more children will be taken from their families and sold. The Americans' case, then, is symbolic of the commitment to

intentions, citing their strong faith and convictions. Beyond that, Silsby asked permission to stay in Haiti, saying, “We petition the court not only for our freedom, but also for our ability to continue to help.”

Seemingly absent from Silsby's understanding of her situation is the possibility that the children of Haiti do not need her help, or at least not the kind

of help she purports to offer. The state of affairs in Haiti certainly requires that its children are adequately taken care of while the country is still reeling from the earthquake, but to whisk children away from their homes, and in many cases their parents, and into new lives dem-



Heartless criminals?

protecting Haitian children. The evidence against the Americans keeps piling up – the house listed as the headquarters of Silsby's nonprofit was lost to foreclosure on December 7, and the Dominican property where she planned to build her orphanage was never purchased – but Silsby, along with friends and family of the detained Americans, insist that the group had no ill

onstrates a narrow, patronizing view of what is “right” more than a legitimate concern for and understanding of the children's current situation. Whatever Silsby's intentions, her actions are tinged with the worst kind of colonial-patriarchal “we know what's best for you” attitude, and nine other well-meaning Americans may have to pay for her arrogance.

Bureaucratic Blackout

An Analysis of the Official Story of the Fort Hood Shooting

by Lauren Duca
STAFF GUIDETTE

If it happens in Seaside, it stays in Seaside, even when it is footage being captured by 4 cameras that will later be nationally broadcasted and labeled as reality television. Let's take Snookers for example: the noble producers at MTV didn't want the public to see that loveable little Oompa Loompa being decked by some drunken brute in a rush of roid rage, so they blacked out the punch heard round the tri-state area, making it impossible to see if you were stranded on a desert island and had no access to the internet or a cell phone.

Everyone was aware of what happened, and knew exactly what was being blacked out. Actually, blacking out the punch did absolutely nothing except draw more attention to the incident, an illogical situation which parallels the report of Major Nidal Malik Hassan's murder of 13 American soldiers on November 5th of this past year.

After the incident came to public attention, Islam was instantly called into question as the impetus for Hassan's actions – a plausible idea, which was

later revealed as much more than an assumption. Hassan broadcasted his radical Islamic and Jihadist beliefs. He attempted to convert others in the army to join his faith and explicitly opposed the war in which he was fighting. If that was all the evidence against him, then calling attention to Islam in Hassan's case would be like mentioning that Ted Bundy really enjoyed fruit cake. But he was not a murderer who just so happened to be a religious zealot, he was a murderer who killed in the name of his faith.

Hassan allegedly screamed, “Allahu akbar” (“God is great”) while slaughtering the 13 men who were killed during his rampage. But the 86-page report on all “slipups” that occurred in Fort Hood does not make any mention of Muslim faith, religion, or even Hassan's name. Leaders of the review, Togo West and Vernon Clark, left these details out in what CNN calls, “a reluctance to cause of-

fense”. Gosh, Togo and Vern, you're so delightfully polite. Hassan shot a whole bunch of American soldiers, and just happened to be fiercely dedicated to the same radical principles as those guys who flew passenger planes into the World Trade Center in the biggest attack on our nation since Pearl Harbor, NBD.



The report's omission has left many, like Senator Joe Lieberman, “disappointed.” Nearly all of the coverage is devoted to the safety procedures and policies that were used to deal with the event. There is a single page, which skims over the massacre itself, and no mention of motive. In defense of this, writers say they were more concerned

with “action and effect.” Okay, so let's identify action and effect. Action: shooting over 41 American soldiers. Effect: 13 dead, 28 wounded. Boom. Now we know that when you shoot a lot of people, they get hurt and some of them, well, they die.

How does this make sense to anyone? We need to be looking at the cause for the action, which is the motive, which is radical Islamic principles. John Carter, the Congressman whose district includes Fort Hood, commented on the report, “We should be able to speak honestly about good and bad without feeling like you've done something offensive to society.” But the report does more than just turn a blind eye to Jihadist extremism: it defends religious fundamentalism, saying, “[it] alone is not a risk factor” as well as that “religious based violence is not confined to members of religious fundamentalist groups.” Nothing was half-assed or forgotten here, radical Islam was deliberately and intentionally omitted.

Is it lying? I mean, so what

you cheated on your boyfriend, right? He didn't ask if you went down on any strangers in the stairway of Hughes recently. It's not like the American people asked if the terrorist attack that took the lives of 13 soldiers had anything to do with Islam. Where's the dividing line between being politically correct and producing propaganda? A few years from now, perhaps witnesses of crimes will be prohibited from citing the race of the suspect. Wouldn't want to hurt anyone's feelings, am I right?

Recently in Comp II, we compared cats to chairs. I was shocked as I realized everyone surrounding me was taking diligent notes. They wanted to be sure to remember that “both have 4 legs.” Like cats and chairs, Snookie and Major Nidal Malik Hassan have something extremely obvious in common. He may not wear his hair in a pouf, have an obviously fake tan, or enjoy battling to house music with juiced, Italian guys, but simple logic can be applied to both his and Snickerdoodle's situation: you can not erase something from the past by simply pretending it never happened.

editorials

Please Don't Feed the Poor: Why Andre Bauer is a Terrible, Terrible Man

by Marisa Carroll
FEATURES EDITOR

André Bauer's grandmother was not an educated woman, or so the Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina told residents at a town hall meeting last January. Perhaps she didn't know much about history, but she certainly knew a thing or two about the magical laws of nature.

"My grandmother was not a highly educated woman, but she told me as a small child to quit feeding stray animals. You know why? Because they breed." Alright, Lt. Governor Bauer. Are there any other Jeff Corwin inspired knowledge bombs you are interested in dropping this evening? "You're facilitating the problem if you give an animal or a person ample food supply. They will reproduce, especially ones that don't think too much further than that. And so what you've got to do is you've got to curtail that type of behavior. They don't know any better."

Now, here's a bit of context. Bauer presented these pseudo-Darwinian ideas in a conversation about (or, an immoral critique of) welfare. Those 58% of South Carolinian students who participate in free and reduced lunch programs, Bauer indicated, are rodent-like sex machines. They must be cut off from their access to lunch programs before they produce rabid welfare babies for a new generation of right-wing bigot-icians to complain about. But the Lt. Governor wasn't done just yet.

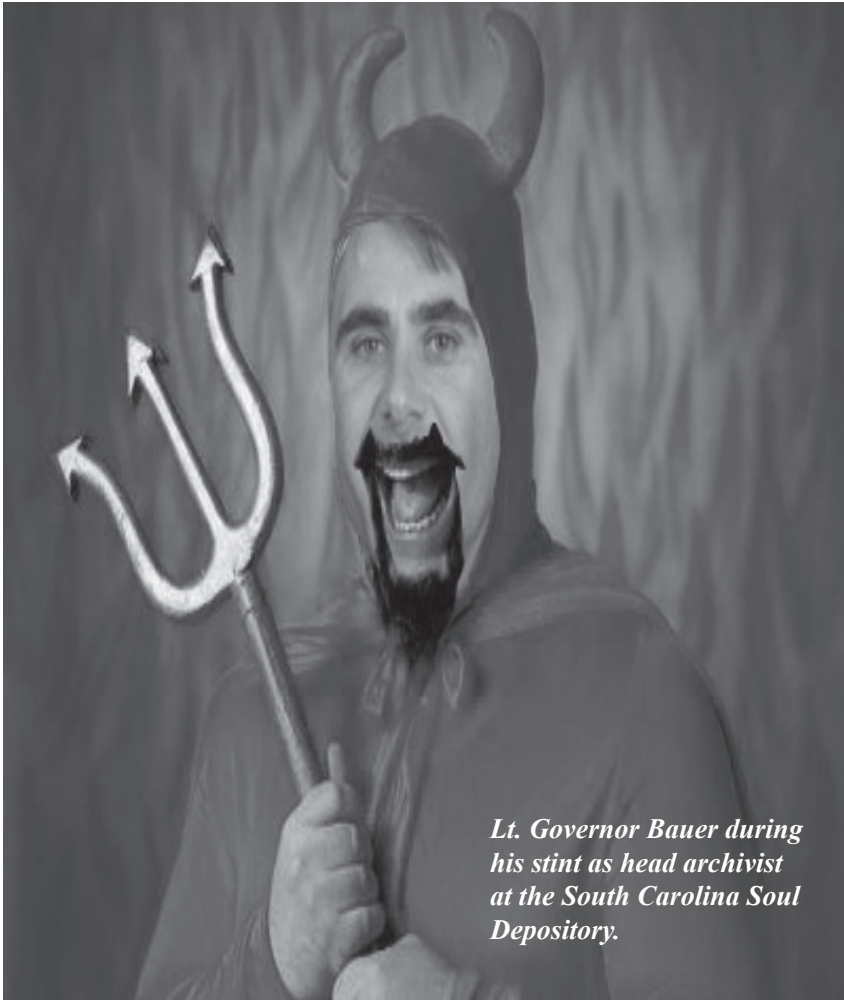
"You see, for the first time in the history of this country," he expertly explained, "we've got more people voting for a living than we do working for a living." Let's cue up "Everybody's Votin' For The Weekend" on the Tinker's jukebox! Let's celebrate our unemployment, writhe about in our collective sloth, forget that South Carolina's history reeks of above-average unemployment and poverty rates!

Of course, a firestorm of criticism has been trailing Bauer ever since his little press con-

ference "oops." From CNN to NPR to the Daily Show, Bauer has been hailed as a "total nightmare" (-John Stewart); he was even criticized heavily by his own party. Still, the best part of the saga is only now unfolding: Boyfriend refuses to apologize!

In Bauer's *guberna-*

Argentina to canoodle with his mistress. The state legislature's response: That blows, but let's just hang on to Sanford and keep that Bauer maniac out of office. While I appreciate any attempts to limit Bauer's power, what is this twisted concept of retribution where Governor Sanford



Lt. Governor Bauer during his stint as head archivist at the South Carolina Soul Depository.

torial campaign ad currently running on real TV stations in the actual United States, he said, "I'm not surprised I've been attacked by Democrats from across the state who want to keep the system as it is. We don't mind helping out the truly needy—the working people who've lost their income or the parents who are trying but can't quite make ends meet. But frankly, we've had enough of giving handouts to those who simply will not help themselves." He then suggests "common sense policies such as drug testing welfare recipients" and vows to "have the courage to speak forcefully and truthfully." Response to the ad has been almost entirely negative.

Basically, André Bauer is why South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford has escaped impeachment after 8 years of personal and political failings. Sanford didn't register to vote until halfway through his first term as governor, rejected stimulus funds despite his state's 9.5% unemployment rate and, let's not forget, spent tax payer money flying back and forth to

wins a Cadillac, Lt. Governor Bauer wins a set of steak knives, and everybody else gets fucked?

Let's be clear: I'm not one to have faith in my politicians, particularly at the state level. Hell, I'm from Illinois—my governor is "competing" in this season of *The Celebrity Apprentice* on NBC. It'd just be nice for once to experience a political system in which bad things happened to bad people. I want to create a giant Whack-A-Mole game where every time André "Archie Bunker" Bauer pops up and screeches, "If you receive goods or services from the government, then you owe something back," a swift tap of the hammer shuts him up for at least the next term. You could replace the characters when the next politicians fumble, effectively pulling them away from the prostitute or the racist healthcare bill or the troop deployment plan. Best of all—when the leaders fail and the stress builds and being civically engaged finally get to be too much—you can simply pull out the plug.

the paper's view

february 10, 2010

"No Stockholm Syndrome Here"

We, the collective editorial board of volume XXX-IX of *the paper*, wish to inform you that we have captured your paltry liberal rag and will not let it go until certain truths are acknowledged and certain demands are met (or we graduate and run off to South America to evade our daunting student loans).

The time has come for a new era of love and understanding at Fordham, and for that to happen we must rouse the masses and tear down Fordham University's proverbial giant statue of Saddam Hussein.

And so we present these demands to *you*, the Fordham Administration; upon *you*, the student body; upon *you*, the prospective student who is confused by the cigarette pack on the cover of this bundle of newsprint you've just picked up.

Remember the fights from last semester. Keep fighting them. The library still doesn't have a 24-hour zone, the Walsh Gate is still closed during the day, and, and we still have no free speech zone. Unfortunately, these things didn't fix themselves during the four week hiatus called winter break. Revive your efforts to attain these things.

Acknowledge the rights of students on campus by supporting the creation of a free speech zone. Though we love being called "the perfect example of free speech on campus," we'll gladly step down in favor of, you know, an actual *place* for free speech on campus. It is offensive that now, in this year of our lord 2010, free speech is not a given on a college campus. Respect your students by respecting their beliefs and opinions.

Remember that you are a university for students. No, we are not your successful, wealthy alumni, or even "close enough" (*cough* Denzel Washington *cough*). But each and every one of us somehow gets you forty fucking thousand dollars a year. We didn't give you this money to be jammed and stonewalled in the convoluted cogs of the Office of Student Leadership and Community Development. The fact that we have an acronym for our student life says far too much about the bureaucratic state of our university.

Rename Campbell, Salice, and Conley Hall Leningrad, Stalingrad and Gorbachev

Hall, respectively. Because they look about as pleasant as Soviet-era Russia.

Get rid of Residential Life. It is a source of pain and insufferable humiliation for your student body. Burn it to the ground.

No more Basketball scholarships until we win some fucking games. At the time of this issue's writing, the team's record is 2-19 with a 14 game losing streak. Develop some unorthodox methods to revitalize this team. Hire a coach who's down and out and struggling with alcoholism, pair him with a crappy team, and we've got the makings of an against-all-odds comeback. Next season, that is.

Open up the underground tunnels. Let us play out our spy fantasies, seriously.

Create, or at least contribute to, a compatible student community on campus. Give us something *to do*, goddammit! It's ridiculous that administrators can self-righteously campaign against students drinking while they supply no feasible alternatives. And **do not** suggest that we attend a Broadway show instead of going to the bar. That shit is for Parent's Weekend only.

Sack whoever is responsible for bringing Guster to Spring Weekend last year. Write them a very unflattering letter of recommendation.

Hold your campus publications accountable. Do not accept the benign content and pedantry of *The Ram*. Likewise, do not hesitate to agree/disagree/discuss/banter with us. We got entirely too few reader responses last semester. We know you folks got stuff to say, and we want to hear it.

Show some respect for your LGBT community. Give all faculty partner benefits, regardless of sexual orientation (see page 3 for more).

Never spend 40k to bring a washed-up politician to campus again. That reminds us, we also heard the College Republicans wanted to bring Glenn Beck to campus. Really? Disband them at once.

If you host another Parents Appreciation Dinner, do not require said parents to pay \$100 for a Sodexo meal. The open bar was nice, but if you're *appreciating* someone, generally you don't make them pay exorbitant fees to come to their own party.

Father McShane must ride the Ram. Just once.

Animal Martyrs or, Inter-species Love in the Era of Devolution

by Sarah Madges
EARWAX EDITOR

The first time I saw Zooney's face was also the millionth time I've seen Kaitlin's face. This past summer Arts Co-Editor Kaitlin Campbell fell into the habit of sending me phone-camera-quality pictures of she and Zooney in cutesy poses with captions like: "Chillin' with the

cage to reunite feather and flesh, he flew at me with a vindictiveness that sounded like a rapidly shuffled deck of cards followed by an infantile scream (that was me), and didn't stop his stalking until I left the room. It seemed winter had frozen Zooney's heart, and I didn't know if spring (semester) could thaw it. Every day after the incident, Zooney treated me with a suspicious an-

Away. Kaitlin and I were living the college dream in our room one day, exhaling breaths of delight out our wide-open window, and laughing at our favorite episode of *Stella*. In the midst of our reverie, there was a rap on the door. We opened the door to see our stern-faced RD-Who-Shall-Not-Be-Named and her sidekick RA. Fuck. They said they smelled weed. I don't



This never happened :(

bird," or "Myspace pic!" And that's how I fell in love. Zooney. Two syllables that elicit tenfold emotions. Three vowels that move my bowels. He's a parakeet—nay—he's more than a parakeet! With fluffy snow-white feathers that tickle the skin (and the heart) with such delicacy, and shocks of blue streaks snaking up his chest, he became my long-distance love: from Springfield, MA to the Bronx. Though he'd never heard my voice, I quickly became smitten with the few chirps that made it through my phone receiver during phone calls with Kaitlin. But then there were weeks of no news, and I kind of forgot about him because I got really into *Californication*. That is until I learned that he, the winsome Zooney, would be residing in the Bronx this year. Yet even after first semester was on its way, I didn't get to formulate a true relationship with Zooney until he came to live in Martyr's with me after winter break. Sure, I had to share him with Kaitlin. But after our intermittent but intimate nuzzlings at the apartment where he stayed, I was confident we could pick things up where we left off—with Zooney pooping on my shoulder while I tried to do homework without disturbing him.

The next time I saw him he perched in his creamsicle-colored cage, hanging from our wall-mounted TV stand. Something was different, though. When I took Zooney out of his

ger that was never explained. I would shoo him away and he'd just shoot across the room to perch on my bed—staring and calculating, a pocket-sized sniper. When before I daydreamed about Zooney's little beak kissing my lower lip, I now had nightmares of him clawing at my face or gouging my eyes. (Imagine if the Alfred Hitchcock movie also involved an interspecies romantic subplot.) True, Zooney was behind bars. But so was Hannibal Lecter. I had to be careful. With every effort to stir up old feelings, Zooney got more violent, flying at my face and snapping at my extended finger whenever I called out "Zooney birdie!" in a voice I hoped sounded cute. I figured at first that he just had cold birdie feet, but when those feet started slashing my fingers, I knew I'd have to try something else. I began a before-bed ritual in which I'd climb cautiously on Kaitlin's chair, and raise my mouth so that it was level with Zooney's. I'd say softly, "Zooney, baby, you know I wanna tap that ass," except really I'd say, "Zooney, why don't you love me? I love you! I love all birds! I don't even eat them! I don't even eat animals! I'm taking a class on animal cognition, and we all think you're a genius! Let's share bird seed!" But to no avail. Our relationship became sheer avoidance and the silent treatment. So I pursued other interests that are illegal in my dorm. Which brings me to The Day Zooney Was Taken

really know why they wanted to tell us about their olfactory observation, but we listened attentively, and explained that odors often drift up from the ledge beneath our window. We were hardly through our flimsy alibis and nervous laughter when the RD yelled, "Whose bird?!" But soon they too were charmed by Zooney's demeanor, and they simply told us to "get rid of him" by the end of the night. I was devastated. Sure, we weren't getting along at the end of our tumultuous relationship, and he had started internet dating, but I still didn't want to see my parakeet-paramour go. For nights I wondered if it just wasn't meant to be...until I remembered the time this squirrel we nicknamed "Sparky" died of electrocution when he chewed on powerlines near our high school, and we didn't have class for a week. Sparky (RIP) was a martyr. And you know, Zooney was a hero too that day. So here's to Zooney, my feathered FWB.



Cohabitation in a Nutshell

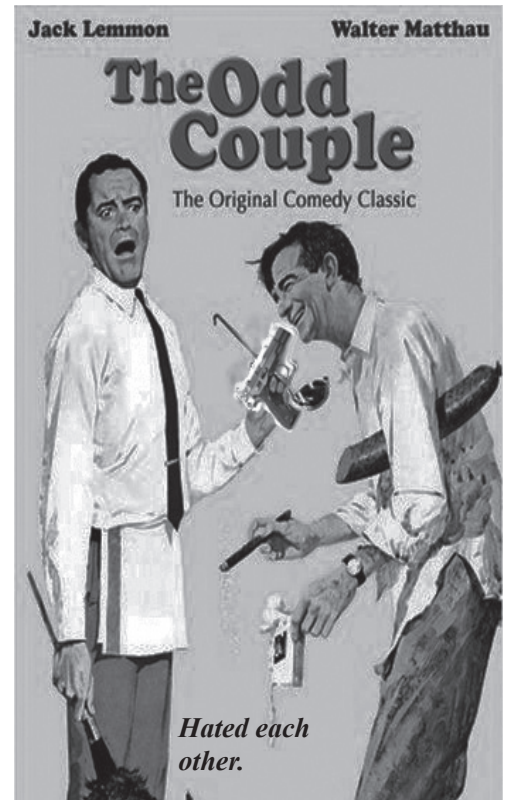
by Taylor Maier
and Pat Murphy
STAFF
BROMANCE

At some point during that last summer before college, a letter arrived at your house containing the names and addresses of your future roommate(s). This person—or, in our case, people—would likely be living with you for at least the next year. You immediately wondered: What do they like? Will we get along?; are they clean?; Do they drink?; Do they smoke? These are but a few of the dozens of questions that ran through each of our minds as we frantically searched their names in the group of accepted Fordham students on facebook.

Finally, after a couple of awkward phone calls and messages online, we got to meet each other on move-in day. Our other roommate, Will, and the two of us all hit it off pretty well and even started hanging out more and more as the year went on. By the time the end of the year had come—and despite the fact that we all chose not to live together during our sophomore year—we all knew that we would definitely be friends for the duration of college.

Despite the apparent success and ease of our freshman year living situation, many of our friends and classmates were either lukewarm towards their roommates or simply hated them. As we walked around campus, we could hear our fellow freshmen complaining about the slob and chain-smoking alcoholics that filled the halls of the freshman buildings. We could only attribute their comments to the melodrama of spoiled adolescents. Once we had finished mocking these people, we could only attribute their comments to the melodrama of spoiled adolescents. After all, we knew (or had at least heard of) most of the people in our year, only a few of whom seemed truly intolerable.

But now that we are a few years removed from the filth and overcrowding currently known to hundreds as freshman living, we have the ability to understand the plight of a suffering dormer. We have come to realize that our situation was the exception, not the rule: Though we remain close with each other and our third roommate—getting together every week or two for a couple of beers and some laughs—we have come to realize that we are the exception, not



the rule. So many of our peers (including many of our friends that are good and kind people) still hold grudges against their roommates, and, in fact, want to torture them to an extent that would make Cartman's treatment of Scott Tenorman seem tame (youtube it).

With this knowledge, we set out to investigate the (non)-relationships that exist between former roommates. There's a wide spectrum of feelings that freshman roommates have towards each other. Some became best friends, living together for the entirety of their college experience and remaining great friends long past that. Others hated each other to an unfathomable degree. Some people were just nit-pickers; some had legitimate concerns. Some had random roommates; others chose them before coming here. Some lived on campus, others off.

A lot of the random rooming pairs, it seemed, were friendly, but not quite friends. Others formed great bonds, like the former-inhabitants of '126' in what was then Alumni Court North. According to Daniel Yacovino, Andrew Gorman and Eric Horvath "ran that shit." That whole wing of the first floor of North formed a strong bond, and many of the residents are currently living with each other (or at least in the same building). Others around the school, however, felt the need to take revenge on their hated roommates by doing unspeakable acts to their pillows or toothbrushes.

So to all of you freshmen who may be having problems with your roommates, remember: when it comes down to getting along with them, it takes balance. Find some common ground and have your fun, but respect your living situation. And have fun in Martyr's next semester!

Oompa-Loompas in the Mist: A Scholar's Tale

By Chris Gramuglia
STAFF JANE GOODALL

The world we live in today is a deep, almost bottomless ocean of different cultures and ethnicities, and this truly is a beautiful thing. The way in which a culture bands together to define itself and becomes unique is a sociological phenomenon that one can't help but appreciate and stand in reverence of. However, this is not always as wonderful and awe-inspiring as it may seem. What I am alluding to is the growing movement that has sprung up in places like Staten Island, Long Island, and of course Seaside Heights, New Jersey. Yes, that's right folks, I'm talking about the social enigma that is the Guido. Tan, jacked, gelled and adorned in Affliction shirts and Ed Hardy sweats, they have arrived. Much like Jane Goodall, I myself lived undetected among a small Guido tribe in Westchester County, New York for a number of years and have been compiling various theories and data on them since their arrival. With the recent popularity of the MTV series "Jersey Shore," I feel that it is my duty to share with you the behavioral patterns and lifestyle of this elusive genus to which I have given the nomenclature, *Guidorum Petropus*. Let me start with the male Gui-

do. Males can range anywhere from five-foot five, to six foot-two, however little else is known about their actual body size because of their excessive and blatant use of anabolic steroids and growth hormones. This tendency to use anabolic steroids is most likely driven by the innate obsession with being the center of attention in any public area, no matter what it takes. Skin tone is commonly altered as well, and usually falls into one of three hues; Cheeto-orange, Oompa-Loompa, and simply "fuckin' tan." Members of the tribe who have achieved the "Fuckin' tan" coloration, are typically alpha-males, and are responsible for merging his pack with other female clans.

Male mating rituals consist of pumping one's fist in the air, while simultaneously frolicking across a dance floor. However, this is only step one. I've noticed that if a female's ceremonial garb contains more glitter or design than the male's, his chances of mating with her are greatly reduced. It is not uncommon for a Guido male to dress in shiny, expensive clothing that to any other member of the homo genus would seem ab-

surd or perhaps even worthy of a Halloween costume. It is also typical for many Guido males to generally spend at least an hour longer readying themselves than Guido females do before leaving their respective dwellings. Almost all of these traits and tendencies have two driving forces: the desire to mate, and the need to secure one's position as the



The Jagerbombs taste like Jagerbombs!

center of attention at all times. Now, I think for the purposes of discussing the female Guido, a dual case study would be highly effective. For this I would like to discuss two female members of the Jersey Shore named JWOWW, and SNOOKI. After observing these two females, I have gathered some interesting theories that I think will hold true if put to the test. Firstly, it seems that females share the male tendency to be the center

of attention, however they do so in drastically different ways. If one watches closely, it is plain to see that JWOWW (JAY-wow) and Snooki (Snu-KEE) both dress themselves in clothing that is intended to expose their sexual organs to males. However they are not exposed until a female performs her own mating dances at local recreation areas in front of males. One of the most popular of these mating dances is something similar to a gymnastic cartwheel, but will only attract males if done while wearing a skirt combined with a thong. A second behavioral pattern I've noticed among females is a territorial desire to "start shit" for no clear reason. JWOWW is a champion of this behavior, as seen in the last episode of Jersey Shore in which she punched The Situation, a member of the male clan featured on the show, in the face. The reason for this behavior is presently unknown, but I speculate that it has something to do with various patterns

in male Guido hairstyles that trigger aggressive behavior in females. Still, this has not yet been confirmed by any real data, as it would be much too dangerous for myself or any other researcher to get close enough to one of these violent attacks. Despite the fact that in the last few years great advances have been made in understanding these unique, strange, and sometimes dangerous creatures, little is actually known about their origins or their future. Some believe that the *Guidorum Petropus* came here from Italy, but this is not accurate, nor has it ever been proven. In fact, there have been minor clashes among Italian-Americans and the *Guidorum Petropus* that make one wonder if they will be able to coexist alongside us if Staten Island, Long Island and Jersey were to ever run out of Heineken light and Armani Code. However, we need not fear the *Guidorum Petropus*. After living alongside them for years it is my honest conclusion that learning as much as we can about their original and mysterious behavior is the best way to ensure that if such a day comes, we can successfully live alongside the *Guidorum Petropus* in harmony like so many various cultures have managed to do in the past.

THE TIJUANA STREET MARKET*

*(NOT AS INAPPROPRIATE AS IT SOUNDS)

by Mickie Meinhardt
ARTS CO-EDITOR

The name Tijuana instantly conjures images of dark streets lit by florescent bar signs, an escape for bachelor parties and spring breakers where wormy tequila shots are liquid courage for the deepest forms of salaciousness. Tijuana could be the name of the most famous prostitute in the world, her conquests innumerable, her myth secreting a depraved allure that has nothing to do with beauty. Yet in reality this courtesan is long past her prime, youth and prosperity fleeting memories that she nurses in the lonely nights when the lights have dimmed on her tired face. Tijuana is drastically different from the tall tales that paint it as a rustic den of sin; it is, somewhat, but far less than one imagines – indeed no more than the very Bronx we live in.

The San Diego trolley took us the 20 miles from the city center through steely outskirts to red-roofed cactus country, suburbs littered with discount superstores and Taco Bells. It is the same populace who fleshes out Manhattan's lower-income communities, all people settling to real life after a brief infatuation and failed courtship with America. Yet the burnt sienna

faces riding the car with me lack one key parallel – there is no aura of defeat here. Anxiety is fleeting in this perpetually golden climate; there is still a sense of perseverance, if not exactly optimism. We reach the border, stepping onto the tracks lined with a handful of duty-free stores and a McDonald's; that these are the welcoming arms extended to the most heavily-trafficked border city in the world is a depressing reflection on our culture.

After crossing (which was as simple as a steel turnstile and a guarded archway reading MEXICO)

we hail a cab to la Avenida Revolucion, the main drag for those seeking novelty trinkets over strip clubs. Here is where my mental images fall apart: it looks no different than the deeper reaches of the Bronx. The Avenida and the surrounding blocks are nearly identical to Fordham Road and the Belmont community with hundreds of

tiny stores all displaying cheap, mass-produced clothing and accessories (replace the gold chains with Taxco silver and the free phones for illegal pharmaceuticals). Yet again, the Avenida is not as sad; there is life here, and however much worse the conditions are is barely an issue when weighed against the silently acknowledged futility that permeates the Bronx. Here, the vendors and street peddlers



"Perdona me, señor; donde esta la tienda 'Jimmy Jazz?'"

tirelessly call but always with a smile and smooth compliment; these hawkers understand the benefits of a little chivalry (to an extent – they are not above dogged and unwelcome persistence). This jocularly makes all the difference and I have fantastic conversations in my garbled Spanish with wrinkled shopkeepers who kiss my hand and

say they've been waiting for us all day. These brief interactions are the highlight of my day, for their optimism never falters despite the intense poverty that characterizes this country – it's uplifting.

But business is slow. Very slow. I make a friend, an assistant salesman who tells me of the combined detriments of the global economy and the Mexican conflicts. Even this most inexpensive of day-trip towns is seeing tourism, its bread and water, trip and falter in the wake of the Great Recession. I notice that there are only a handful of tourists on the blocks-long street, which the man tells me was once bustling. The entreats of the storekeepers are immediately less annoying and I finally recognize the sadness behind the laughing cries of "Amigos, over here!" – we may be one of less than a dozen sales all day.

There is a pseudo-mini-library with books and pictures of Tijuana's history, dusty brown snapshots chronicling the city's rise to glory and fall to illicit

ness and eventual abandonment. The danger is real, but it isn't here on this street, nor is it in Ensenda or Costa Azul, the other primary tourist destinations in TJ. Before I depart my friend tells me it is nice here, but "no one comes anymore to know that." The media coverage of the Mexican drug wars has ruined business; coaxing back notoriously skittish Americans will prove difficult.

So we buy some woven blankets and tequila, scarf a couple of fantastic street vendor tacos (the greatest and most legitimate Mexican food in existence), and drop a donation to the wandering costumed mariachi band. None of it we need, or even really want, but the sense of necessity is so palpable that to do any less would almost seem wrong, like refusing to pay the call girl after she's given it up. Leaving in the late afternoon, we encounter many Americans in the Customs line, all crossing back to the homeland with knickknacks in black plastic bags. We come and frivolously spend what is, to us, paltry disposable amounts, all the while this meager coinage is someone's dinner or rent, someone's means of survival.

In the end, we are exploiting it.

NBA: National Ballistics Association?

by Aly Kravitz
STAFF PISTOL DUEL

In 1995 Abe Pollin decided to change the name of his NBA team from the Washington Bullets to the Washington Wizards. The crime and homicide rates in Washington, D.C. were skyrocketing and Pollin was growing uneasy with the violent connotations of the name. Well, Abe, it was a nice try.

In December, Gilbert Arenas, the all-star Wizards guard, got in a dispute with a fellow teammate, Javaris Crittenton, in the locker room. The disagreement, allegedly over a gambling debt Crittenton owed Arenas, resulted in the players drawing guns on each other. Let's not dwell on the gambling part (is it even worth bringing up the disgraced referee Tim Donaghy yet again?) and skip right to the gun part. The first question begging to be asked is: why did the players have guns in the locker room anyways? In response to that question, Arenas told team officials that he took the guns to the Verizon Center, the Wizard's home court, because he didn't want them near his newborn son at home. Oh, well that's fine; he was just being a responsible parent. Now that that issue's cleared up, another one arises: why do so many NBA players—many of them millionaires with adoring fan bases feel the need to carry around automatic weapons? Not only is it dangerous and often unlawful, but it's do-



ing further damage to a league already associated with thugs and gangsters.

Now, I'm a diehard NBA fan. In high school I planned social outings around big games, and if I absolutely had to miss one, I taped it and watched it later (am I revealing too much embarrassing information for a first article?) My dad would just shake his head and say, "Aly, I don't know why you waste your time watching this stuff; they're all a bunch of thugs." I would argue passionately with him, defending Allen Iverson's poor grammar, Ron Artest's attempt at a rap album and the ink scribbled on almost every single player. But even I am losing faith in my beloved basketball stars.

This latest incident is just one link in a chain of violence that has grown as long as the one around Stephon Marbury's neck. Let's have a brief recap of the past few years: There's the

infamous "Malice at the Palace" in 2004, when a brawl between members of the Detroit Pistons and Indiana Pacers spilled into the stands and got fans involved. Two years later the echoes of that day rang in Madison Square Garden when a game between the Knicks and the Nuggets dissolved into a similar melee. Stephen Jackson, a Pacer who led the charge into the bleachers in Detroit, resurfaced in the police bulletins later that year when he got in a fight outside a nightclub and fired five shots into the air. My personal favorite incident took place this past September, when Delonte West, a guard for the Cleveland Cavaliers, was pulled over on his motorcycle. Upon investigation, police found a loaded gun in his waistband, another strapped to his leg, and a shotgun in a guitar case slung across his back. If that isn't absurd enough, he was riding a three-wheeled motorcycle. Take a minute and picture it.

So what is being done about this problem? Both the commissioner of the NBA, David Stern, and the Wizards immediately issued official statements amounting to a slap on the players' oversized hands. The league also announced Wednesday, January 27th that both players are suspended for the rest of the season without pay. A punishment that severe has only been meted out on two other occasions (one was to Ron Artest for his brawl, and the other was to Latrell Sprewell for strangling his coach at practice in 1997).

But how severe is this punishment, really? Let's do a little math and figure it out. In July of 2008 Arenas signed a six year contract with the Wizards for \$111 million. This suspension is going to cost him an estimated \$9.9 million. That means he's still going to make OVER A HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS IN SIX YEARS! If he's not too busy trying to make ends meet over the next nine months, he'll be able to relax in his recently renovated home. Over the summer he added a man-made mountain and a pool with three fish tanks, one of which has a recess with a couch in it so he can sit in the tank and look up at the fish (estimated cost: one million dollars). Wow, David Stern, you really showed him. There is a possibility that

the Wizards will void his contract, which would result in a more substantial \$80 million loss, but since the NBA is a league built on stars and Arenas is one of them, I wouldn't bank on it. Oh, by the way, you should probably know that the gambling debt that sparked off the whole ordeal was in the amount of \$25,000.

Javaris Crittenton has been getting practically no media attention for his role in the incident. There's a simple explanation: he doesn't enjoy the status that Arenas does. No one knows his name, he hasn't played much this season due to a foot injury and he makes a paltry \$1.7 million a year. Gee, I hope he'll be able to pay the bills during his suspension.

I don't mean to say that Arenas and Crittenton are terrible people. They didn't actually shoot each other, neither of them have a criminal past and Arenas has given gobs of money away to charities. All I'm saying is that they've disappointed millions of adoring fans, including the one writing this article. Abe Pollin, the former Wizards owner who tried so valiantly to circumvent this type of issue with the name change, didn't live to read the headlines proclaiming the news of the locker room run-in. If he had he would have learned that, despite his best efforts, a team by any other name will still pack heat.

Subway Vagrancy

Or, the Triborough Nap

by Sean Kelly
EXECUTIVE CO-EDITOR

I awoke terrified. In a sealed capsule rocketing through an underground tunnel, one tends to lose almost all orientation of space and time, and time becomes rather like a blob of wax on a sunny windowsill: retaining familiar qualities, but moving in quite unfamiliar ways. I turned to where my roommate had been sitting just minutes (or was it hours?) ago, only to find nothing but his black and white checkered backpack in his former stead. I bolted up in my seat, which for a heretofore unknown amount of time had served as a mobile and bacteria-infested cot, and, bearing the imprint marks of a railing on my pallid and blank face, I began to gather my thoughts and sloppily attempt to patch up my fragile mental constitution.

So, I was on the 4 train—at least that much was clear. I had gotten on the train some time ago at Union Square with my intended destination being Fordham Road. How long ago this was, I had no idea. However, I knew that somewhere along the line my intentions had been

undermined by sinister forces far beyond my control. (of whether these forces were those



of my own idiocy or the boundless cruelty of the MTA I still was not sure). The convenient light-up stop counter featured in all new subway cars was telling me that I was heading in the opposite direction of Fordham. In addition to this disconcerting bit of info, it also said that I was in Brooklyn. Had I gotten on a downtown train by mistake? No, that couldn't be. Although my splotchy memory of arriving in Union Square refused to yield much information (despite my repeated badgering), I would have had to go down an entirely different staircase in a different

section of the station in order to erroneously end up at the downtown platform, which I was

quite positive I had not done. All the cognitive dissonance and nebulous information assaulting my aching and dehydrated brain raised in me a radical doubt of nearly Cartesian proportions. Besides the fact that I was on the 4 train, I was sure of only one thing: something was terribly, terribly wrong.

My bloodshot and half-opened eyes darted frantically around the sterile, fluorescently-lit subway car, though my brain was too busy trying to understand the situation to make much sense of any visual stimuli. Thankfully, upon looking

to my left, I saw my roommate sprawled out across a different bench, and I was quite happy to realize that there was more of him remaining in the car than just his gaudy rucksack. Should I wake him up? No, spare the poor guy the crippling confusion that I was experiencing. I'd deal with him once I had a plan, so that maybe he could have at least a shred of reassurance from a source other than a demarcated Lite-Brite.

After collecting all of the information that I could, it was time to make sense of it all. My rational faculties awakened (albeit in a sluggish manner), and I began the frightful task of remembering. I knew that I had either: a) accidentally gotten on a downtown train, or b) had somehow slept from one end of the line to the other. The second possibility seemed to me at the time to be a bit of absurd lunacy offered merely for the sake of argument—That is, until I looked at the clock. The offensive green and orange digital numbers of the time displayed on the LED screen near the stop counter taunted me with exactly what I had feared since my violent wake-up: it read 6:00 a.m.

I had gotten on the subway in Union Square around 3:00 a.m., and after a bit of thought I concluded that the 4 train making its way all the way from 14th street to Woodlawn, turning around, charging through the entirety of the Bronx and Manhattan, and ending up at the (other) end of the line in Brooklyn in three hours whilst I slept was entirely plausible. Unfortunately, not only was it plausible, it had happened. I buried my sullen face in my dirty palms as I came to a conclusion that no man should ever have to come to within five minutes of waking up: I had missed my stop. By a lot. By two goddamn boroughs.

Shit.

I reluctantly walked over to the bench that my roommate had been calling home for the past three hours and gave him a hearty shake on the shoulder. He woke with a start, and looked understandably confused and disoriented. When he regained his verbal faculties, he looked up and inquired, "Oh, are we here?" I sighed plaintively and responded, "Well, I suppose that depends on what you mean by 'here'."

Taking It Easy:

A Student's Guide to Appearing Sane

by Lauren Duca
STAFF GREG BEHRENDT

Trapped on the Ram Van the other day, I was forced to eavesdrop on one of the most insipid conversations I have ever not been included in. One girl was saying, "So he still hasn't answered me, even though he seemed like he wanted to hang out when I asked. I texted him twice, called him, and then called him on a different number just to see if he'd pick up. He did." Her friend responded, "He's probably busy! He studies a lot." It was Saturday night, and that would have been a load

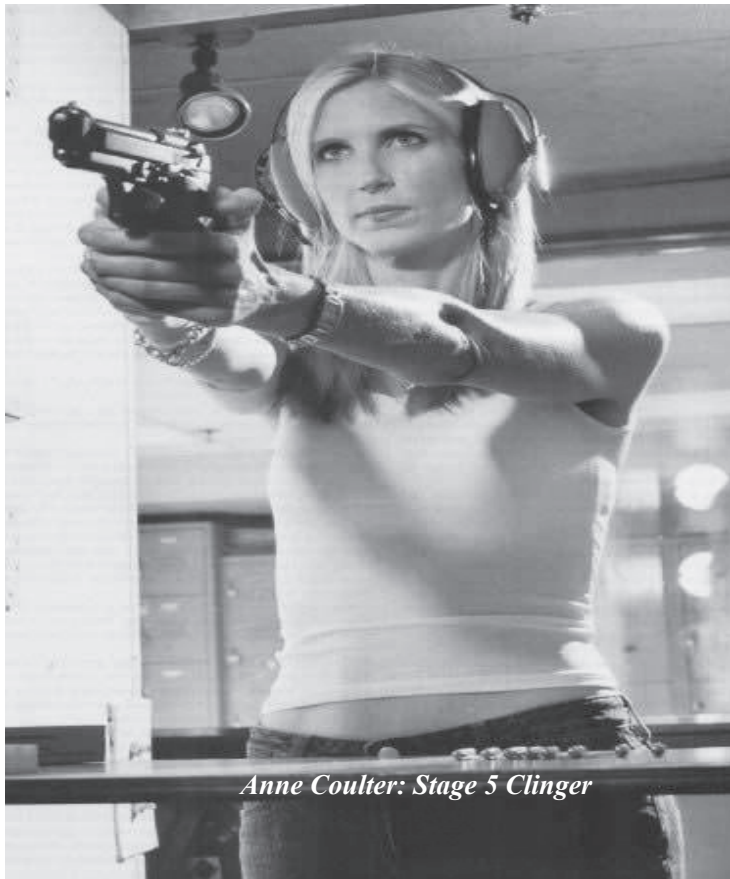
if your doppelganger is Ginnifer Goodwin. She looks like you in the thumbnail that is 1/16th the size of your profile picture because you both have short brown hair. Susan Boyle looks like you in the thumbnail too, but you're not calling her your "twinsy," now are you?

Being confused by this idea that you are the "exception" is a quick and easy road to take if you want to be labeled a psycho bitch. What does it take to be given such a negative reputation? Well, there's a few ways. There's clinginess, which comes in the form of double texts, aggression, and includes

ex's car with a butcher knife.

It sucks to be starving in Ethiopia, but at least if you are no one tells you to "just get over it." When crush of your life #73 turns out to be less interested than you may have thought, that is what you have to do. Isn't it better if it you only feel semi-ashamed, like when you wake from a suburban-road-induced driving trance to the radio playing Maroon 5, only to realize you're sort of enjoying it, rather than extremely ashamed, like when you've drunkenly yelled at him across the room that you are "his loss?" Perhaps I'm a cynic cause I have a lot of guy friends. I've heard girls referred to as stage 5 clingers and hippopotami, and going into any non-platonic anything, I'd rather not be either of those things (though if I had to pick, I'd go with the former). But the idea here is not simply to avoid appearing bat shit crazy. If you're out cutting up some dude's ride with a potential murder weapon, you'll still be bat shit crazy after reading this article.

Figure it out. If he is not texting, calling, commenting, emailing, writing, smoke-signaling or waving back he is just not that into you, and there's not much you can do about it. Sure, you can try and make him jealous. There will always be a silver medal for your unrequited love who will willingly hook arms with you as you pretend to inadvertently strut past Prince Charming. And if it works, if he actually realizes the error of his ways and begins responding to your various communicative attempts, it's still worthless. If he wasn't interested before, he's not genuinely interested now, and is in fact only responding to his raging hormones, which have now been ignited by jealousy. Consider his advances as special as the various boxes of chocolates, nuts, and stale sugar cookies that my father receives for Christmas in a huge basket from work only to be individually re-wrapped and re-gifted by my mother. But don't get too down. Yeah, your little games are useless, and your life probably just got a lot more boring, but at least now you don't look like a fucking idiot.



Anne Coulter: Stage 5 Clinger

of crap on a Tuesday afternoon. Herein lies the main problem: there are no resources for rational romantic thought. It'd be a great start if you stopped encouraging your hopeless friend, and lay down the truth: he's just not that into you. Now, that sounds like a familiar movie. Except, the saccharine chick flick you are thinking of was a travesty of the message it proclaimed. Let's just make this entirely clear. Yes, Justin Long returned to kiss Ginnifer Goodwin, despite explicitly informing her that he was not interested. The thing is, your guy is actually not interested. You are not "the exception to the rule." Note: This is remains true even

any attempt to take control of a romantic situation that doesn't occur on Sady Hawkin's Day. And then there's actual psychotic behavior, which can be found in various asylums, mental institutions, and high schools. Now, I am not condoning clingy aggression or aggressive clinging, but anything can be taken too far. Let's review the example of the girl who walked up to a friend of mine at Tinkers, reached into his pocket, grabbed what she thought was his dick, and cooed, "Oh, what's this?" To her dismay, he responded, "My EPI pen," and wasn't kidding. Or perhaps that of Kenisha, from VHI's Tough Love, who slashed all four tires of her

Fiorina's Ad:

Bad in a Baaaad Way

by Emily Genetta
EXECUTIVE CO-EDITOR

I am a very bitter, cynical human being. Sure, much of this is probably due to some deep-seated trauma or psychological pathology. But a sizable portion of it comes from having gained my political consciousness during the Bush era. Not since Nixon has there been a worse time to develop one's faith in humanity as a whole and government in particular... though I'd like to credit Barack Obama (and John Edwards) with annihilating that last bit of faith in people and our ability to govern ourselves.

All this is to say that I'm not one for the occasional forced whimsy of campaigning politicians. Watching clips of Clinton on Arsenio Hall makes me want to break things. Watching clips of (other) Clinton taking shots with the good-ol'-boys makes me want to break people. But, for some absolutely unfathomable reason, I love whimsical political ads. A small part of me even loves the politicians who make them.

Take, for example, Mike Gravel's *Rock*. I urge you to youtube this piece of avant-garde existentialism— though, as bearchewtoy75 helpfully notes in the comments, "if you watch it, it means in 7 days you're going to die." The way Mike stares at you for over a minute before throwing a rock into a lake certainly seems threatening... but also dead-pan hilarious! Then there's Ralph Nader in *That One Ad with the Parrot*, in which he expresses his disappointment at the state of the world to the titular parrot. He then ponders dressing up as a panda and "casting amorous glances" at another panda in order to... get attention? It worked; I forgive you for everything, Ralph!

It's easy to say that about someone who has no chance of ever serving in an elected position again. The situation is a bit different when it comes to

Carly Fiorina, who's running in the Republican primary for a senate seat now held by my girl Barbara Boxer. Fiorina, a former Hewlett Packard CEO, actually has a pretty good chance of winning. That's why I can't pretend to like her, and why she can't create a ridiculous, whimsical ad to (not) win me over.

Technically speaking, Carly never created a ridiculous, whimsical ad; some mad genius named Fred Davis did it for her. The only problem is that it fails entirely. Whereas Ralph stretched the definition of 'whimsical' with his furry/bestiality nod, Davis breaks past whimsy altogether and delves into terrifying with demon-sheep-man a.k.a. opponent Tom Campbell (?). More upsettingly, the ad just tries. so. hard. You have a man in a demon sheep costume? Awesome - that's funny. You exaggerate all the dramatic cliches of political ads in an attempt to be... funnier? Satirical? 'Aware'? Whatever you were going for, three-and-a-half minutes of sudden cuts and a cloying narrator is just fucking annoying. Most egregious of all is the mixed metaphor; is Tom Campbell leading the sheeple, as the narrator claims, or is he a wolf-in-sheeple clothing, as the video shows? I don't know, and nothing makes me angrier than an imipropriely-deployed literary device!

I will definitely not be voting for Carly Fiorino, mostly because I don't like her policies and I'm registered in Jersey, but also because her ad is truly a failure as a bit of entertaining whimsy. Political commentators agree with me, except they think it's a failure as a political ad. It is. All of these ads are. But that's beside the point for some jaded soul like me, who only wanted to be amused for a minute or two. I've learned my lesson, Carly; I'm hardening my heart a little more.



The Ampersand needs your submissions.

Send fiction, poetry, and art to ampersand.submission@gmail.com

Deadline March 3rd.



Tom Campbell?? Is that... You?

Skepticism is sooo 2k9...

Why Religion is Gaining Ground in the New Decade

by Chris Gramuglia
STAFF SKEPTICAL
SKEPTIC

I'd like to first say that I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. What? Oh, come on, you remember. Christmas - that day when you wake up early and even though you don't deserve them, there's a shit-ton of presents placed neatly under a glowing pine tree in your living room. You know it has something to do with that guy Jesus being born like a million years ago, and some wise men who bring him cinnamon or something, but screw that! You just got Assassin's Creed II, and if you don't play it soon you might have to change your pants. Yeah, now it's all coming back.

Far too easy, I've noticed, is it to just yawn "screw that" when it comes to religion, especially in our early twenties, even when we go to school and live in a society that was built on religious principles. It almost seems as though unbelief is just as trendy and cool as coming up with a nickname for your abs and "punching a bitch in the face" at a bar in Seaside. However, this is as far from the actual truth as the nutritional information in the caf.

Regardless of what the consensus is among uber-skeptic Darwinists like Tufts University philosophy professor Daniel Dennett, Richard Dawkins, and my favorite funny-man Ricky Gervais, religion is on the rise. In fact, 81% of Americans align themselves with some form of faith, whereas only 14.1%

THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW Feb. 10, 2010

Best Sellers

Last Week	Weeks On List	This Week	Rank	Title	Last Week	Weeks On List
				NONFICTION		
	1	1	1	The Bible , by anonymous	7	7
	2	2	2	IN DEFENSE OF FOOD , by Michael Pollan	1	8
	3	3	3	THE AGE OF AMERICAN UNREASON , by Susan Jacoby	6	2
	4	4	4	RECONCILIATION , by Benazir Bhutto	2	2
	5	5	5	PREDICTABLY IRRATIONAL , by Dan Ariely		1

claim they have no religious affiliation. Nonetheless, I'm sure you're sitting back, saying to yourself, "I believe in the power of reason, science and truth-- not fairy tales about angels and alternate realities. I'm too smart for that!" Fair enough. I feel the same way.

But it seems a little pompous, nay, a little ignorant to assume that everything in the universe simply occurred by random chance, and that you me and everyone else in the world are nothing more than fleshy bio-machines that came from a primordial puddle of germs and bacteria. That being said, for the remainder of this article, I invite you to forget the words Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and so forth, and as so many non-believers pride themselves on doing, think logically and with a critical eye.

So, let's address the Big Bang, the theoretical and spontaneous explosion that spawned all matter and mass. The fact that most non-believers who use this as their foremost defense against God don't grasp,

is that this theory forces most prominent atheists to hide under the covers clutching their microscopes and calculators. Strangely enough, a perfectly reasonable, scientific explanation for why we are all here isn't widely embraced at American Atheist meetings or amidst the new regime led by Richard Dawkins known as the "Bright" movement. Here's why.

If the universe had a beginning then time as we know it must have begun as well. So it can be said, in the words of author Dinesh D'Souza, "once upon a time, there was no time." Strange as a concept as this is, it is widely accepted by physicists like everyone's favorite, Stephen Hawking. It's a difficult concept to grasp for just about anyone. What would it be like with no time? Does that mean that I don't get to smoke a ton of weed on 4/20, or I'll miss Keeping up with the Kardashians? Among other things, yes, those are both true.

It's also worth considering that before any of the advances in modern science or physics, reli-


gious scripture told of a point in which the universe started. "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters." Genesis 1:1-2.

Sounds a lot like the same thing by a different, more poetic name to me. And to think! People were still pooping in buckets when this was written, let alone doing astrophysics!

I'd also like to address another hot topic of skeptic debate; consciousness. Put simply, consciousness is our awareness of ourselves, our own thoughts and the world around us that cannot, by another individual, be seen, touched, heard or proven by any practical means. It serves no Darwinian purpose, and to thinkers like Dennett, exists plainly as an illusion created by the senses and firing of neurons in the brain. I think most would agree that this is somewhat of an escape route for the provision of a real argument. It would be highly offensive to assume that someone whose sensory equipment was impaired simply was "un-conscious" or operated on a lower level of consciousness than other people.... right? The implications of consciousness are vast, yes, but nonetheless they do allude to something supernatural. Lastly, in doing my best to keep within the paper's generous one-thousand word limit, I'd like to discuss human morality. Richard Dawkins summarizes morality as an evolutionary manifestation of the "I'll scratch


your back, if you scratch mine" philosophy and maintains that it is a means of animal survival. I disagree. How can one explain the actions of charitable organizations, or the decision of someone like Ghandi or Mother Theresa to help the sick or the poor? These are central themes in not only Christianity but also in Islam - not atheism. Surely these altruistic individuals don't think that the poor and ill will one day come back and grace them with some sort of reward that will aid in their survival. To assume that would just be irrational! It's also worth noting that a great deal of the major historical crimes against humanity were not committed in the name of God, but in accordance with the secular idea that "God is Dead." It was Nietzsche himself who spread the idea that without God there is no place for morality and although it may survive for a time, it will inevitably be replaced by societal chaos.


In conclusion, I would like to point out that the purpose of this piece was not to belittle the choices people make in determining their beliefs. However, it was meant to shed some light on the multitudes of propaganda that are being spread on a daily basis by self-proclaimed, not to mention extremely smug, "smart guys" who have somehow escaped from their labs and gotten their hands on microphones and huge auditoriums. As a former skeptic, I urge you to consider the vast amounts of evidence out there and I hope that, regardless of which name you give it, you wind up believing in something.




"Who loves the paper?"

Do you love Kel Mitchell? Do you love the paper? If not, why did you take one? Give it back. If so, come to our meetings every Tuesday at 8 pm in the Ramskeller!





"Kel loves the paper."



arts

THE ECONOMICS OF GAGA

by **Mickie Meinhardt**
ARTS CO-EDITOR

In the past week I have twice found myself in the midst of heated debates -- not about politics or academics, but about Lady Gaga. The glam pop star has exploded in the past year, commandeering media attention all over the world for her fascinating antics and unignorable singles. She opened the 2010 Grammy Awards with a duet with Elton John and walked away with two wins (Best Dance Recording, for 'Poker Face', and Best Electronic/Dance Album, for *The Fame*) from her five nominations. 4 songs from her debut album reached number 1 and her 2009 digital sales reached over 15 million. She even received her own holiday -- Friday, January 29th was National Lady Gaga Day. There is no doubt that the U.S. media is in the midst of a heady Gaga love affair, but the question posed by many is: what exactly makes Lady Gaga so great? What makes her different from the average over-the-top pop star?

One could differentiate Gaga by noting her projected, self-created character and her love of adding a little too much to every aspect of her life -- wardrobe, performance set, hairstyles -- is outlandish, even bizarre, but surrounds her in untouchable glamour. Though many previous musicians have donned ridiculous costumes during performances (she's cited Bowie, Queen, and Michael Jackson as influences), few have crossed into the realm she currently occupies. There was her plastic-bubble dress on the May 2009 cover of *Rolling Stone*, her July 2009 gown made of stitched-together Kermit the Frog dolls or her now-iconic hair-bow made of her own hair. The list is endless. Fast-fashion retailers H&M and Forever 21 have both channeled her into their winter collections by adorning nearly everything with sequins, fake leather, bows, and rhinestones. Her performance sets are as much a part of the show as her music -- The Monster Ball tour boasted a rectangular frame set likened to a hollowed out TV and included endless theatrics to create a "pop-electro opera." But Gaga is not the first to have either a massively expensive set or accompanying costumes -- the difference is her level of control over it. Her Haus of Gaga pro-

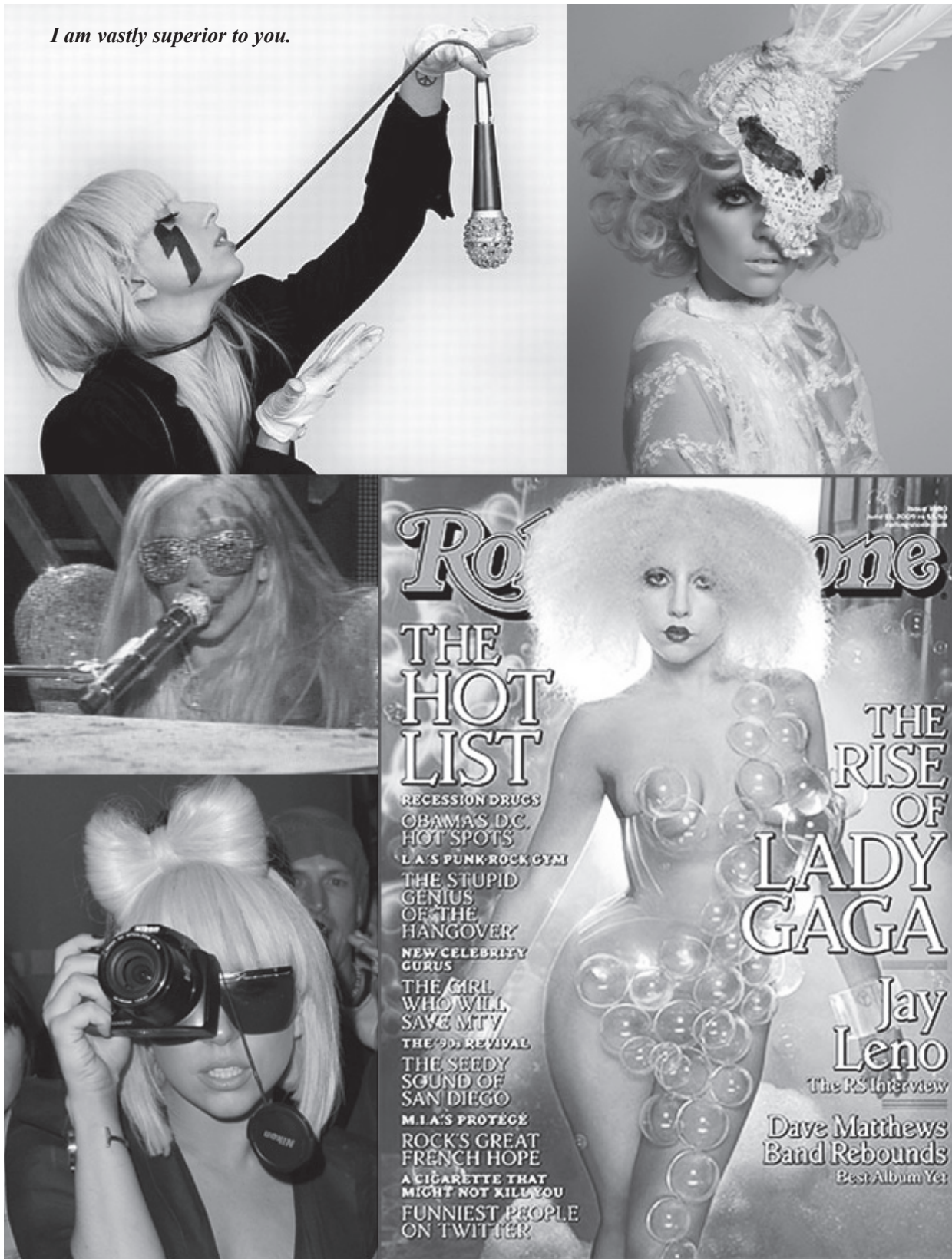
duction company, a group of her closest advisors and friends she assembled in 2008 during the finalization of her album, *The Fame*, handles every aspect of the Gaga image. They concep-

Gaga (real name: Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta) and catching Streamlines attention. She briefly wrote songs for New Kids on the Block, Fergie, and Britney Spears before begin-

gant shows that, in the long run, garner her more fame (and thus more money). "Would she be in the position to play in front of 20,000 people a night if the record company had not put up

downloads available which are a prime example of how the recording industry has generally become a true DIY phenomenon. Lady Gaga is not simply an artist under contract; she is a savvy businesswoman with the panache to style herself, the brains to market it, and the appreciation to connect with her fans (her Twitter, which she updates daily, has 2.6 million followers). From this great of a self-exposure comes an enormous fanbase -- a hardcore and extremely dedicated one at that.

If these on-paper arguments fail to satisfy those still skeptical of the true Lady Gaga impact, one method proves failproof -- Youtube video clips. One of the two (long and alcohol fueled) debates I engaged myself in this week was settled by a viewing of her 2010 Grammy performance. The group of skeptics were hushed and quickly entranced as they watched Gaga appear (in a futuristic, rhinestone-encrusted teal leotard) atop the "Fame Factory" set, ringed in flames and leap down into a 2-minute rendition of 'Poker Face' before she was carried off by her "minions" into a chute and emerging from its bowels riding a two-way grand piano with Sir Elton John. The two soulfully belted a beautiful vocal mash-up of their songs 'Speechless' and 'Your Song'. The audience was captured by the typical theatrics but held by a part of Gaga rarely seen: her simple, pure *singing*, stripped of the robotic range modifications usually present in her recorded songs (note: the various 'voices'



tualize her next show or outfit and find the right material and/or designer to bring them to life, all under Gaga's direction.

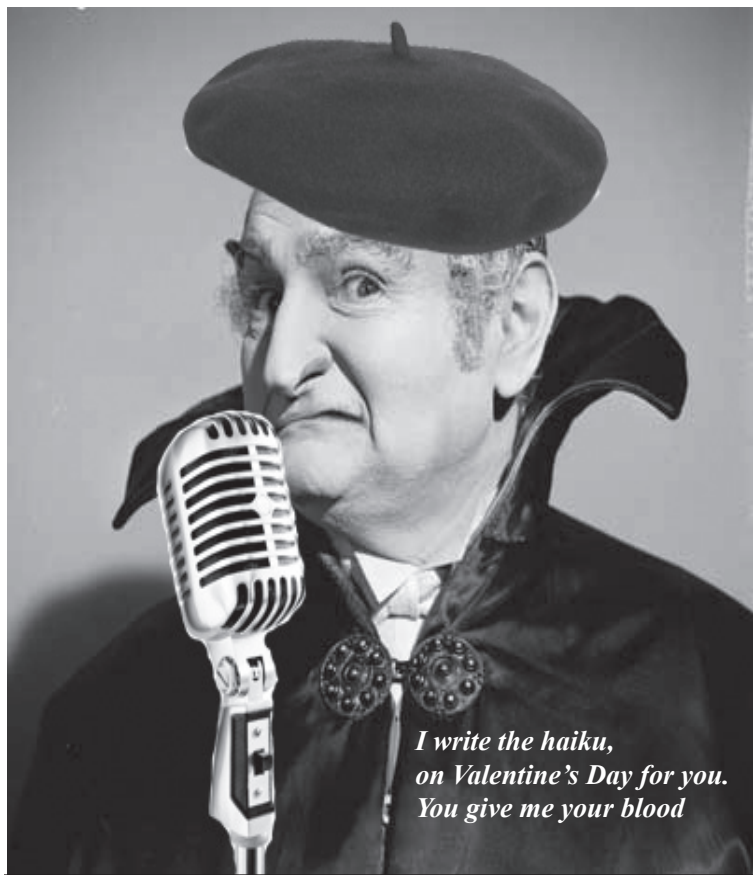
This amount of control spills over into Gaga's recording contract -- a free-form and very loose agreement with Streamline which she negotiated herself and which shows why Gaga is not 'just another pop star'. Originally signed to Def Jam in 2005, she eschewed the label after being unexpectedly dropped. From there she began performing in Manhattan as "The Ultimate Pop Burlesque Rockshow" with performance artist Lady Starlight, crafting her outlandish and sexualized persona Lady

ning work on her debut album, two singles from which immediately skyrocketed. Yet the record company was not given traditional control over Gaga. Instead, she negotiated a "360 model"-- a new type of contract through which the company fronts more money (for marketing and set design) in exchange for a cut of the non-record-sale earnings (from merchandise and ticket sales) that artists normally keep entirely. The company also gets percentages of the earnings from her M.A.C. cosmetics and Polaroid partnerships. While Gaga herself is making less money, she has the backing to create the fabulously extrava-

the marketing dollars?" asked Gaga's manager Troy Carter. Probably not. 97% of the shows on her tour were sold-out and the Radio City Music Hall show earned \$1.3 million alone. It's a give-and-take arrangement with economic and creative freedom that few other pop-stars enjoy.

Gaga herself also projects much of her music digitally -- though iTunes is negotiated via Streamline, her Myspace and Twitter, which have featured links to free-streaming or just plain free downloads, are entirely self-run. Undoubtedly, a lot of listeners have obtained tracks or albums illegally, but there are a fair amount of *legal* Gaga

one hears in most songs is replicated live, without the use of computers -- it sounds techno, but it isn't distorted by technology). Perhaps this is the truest test: when one boils off her rhinestones, glitter and batwing capes, one will find Gaga still has an amazing voice and can accompany it on the piano with mastery -- a skill few pop-artists can match. Pop music is not universal, especially to skeptical indie critics. But the greatness of Lady Gaga is something we all can appreciate: she is a package, a conception, and a business as much as she is a musician. She demonstrating true mastery of her craft from every level.



*I write the haiku,
on Valentine's Day for you.
You give me your blood*

Hello Readers,

If you're worrying about how to make your Valentine's Day extra-special, you can stop now. We've put together a list of completely un-related arts events that will make you forget about Valentine's Day entirely. Except the last one, there's naked people.

But if you're going to be *sore* about these suggestions, you can voice your opinion at the Valentine's 'open mic of love and hate,' Feb 12th at 8:30 pm at Rodrigue's Coffee House. Or you could grab a 40 oz. of Balantine's quality malt liquor, and meet me in the parking lot at dusk. No side-kicks. No dates. -K.C.

What: *Come and See Before the Tourists Will Do - The Mystery of Transylvania*

When: Feb. 11 – Mar. 13, 10am to 6pm

Where: Team Gallery/ 83 Grand Street between Wooster and Greene

HOWMUCH: N/A

Why: Gert and Uwe Tobias are twin brothers from Transylvania. After choosing from a list of titles of American and British films about vampires for inspiration, they created vividly colored wood block prints that really are large-scale "posters" which pull sources from Bauhaus, vintage fashion magazines, travel posters, and fabric designs and will be displayed in this instillation exhibit.

What: *Which Way, America?*

When: Feb. 18 at 7:30/ Feb. 19, 7:30 pm and 10 pm/ Feb 20, 5:30 pm and 8:30 pm

Where: Leonard Nimoy Thalia/ 2537 Broadway at 95th Street

HOWMUCH: \$10 with the promotional code "10BUCKS"/\$30 for people who don't read the paper!

Why: The Thalia Follies troupe will its sixth season of political cabaret with songs, sketches, and satire, keeping a keen eye on our nation including a version of Fred Astaire's "Cheek to Cheek" for the new decade called "Yemen - I'm from Yemen....," Tiger Woods' social correspondence, Raindrops on roses, whiskers on kittens, bottled water, footwear, and other "Favorite Things" you can no longer bring aboard an airplane and The World premiere of The Three Trillion Dollar Opera featuring the smash hit "Barack the Knife" Wine and a "light evening meal" will be provided during the show.

What: The Nuyorican Friday Night Poetry Slam

When: Every Friday 10 pm

Where: Nuyorican Poets Café 236 East 3rd Street Between Ave B & C

HOWMUCH: \$10 and worth it.

Why: Despite this events being featured in previous issues, I'm including it as an incessant reminder to everyone who has not been to a Nuyorican Slam. You won't regret it, go.

What: Naked at the Museum Scavenger Hunts for Valentine's Day

When: Feb 13 – 14, times vary

Where: The Met and The Brooklyn Museum

HOWMUCH: Price Varies. Advance purchase required.

866-811-4111 or <http://watsonadventures.com/valentinesday.html>

Why: Do. Something. Crazy – on Valentines Day. Go on a Scavenger Hunt with a team of two to six people to discover secrets hidden in works of art involving nudity while tackling witty, tricky questions. No knowledge of art—or nudity—is needed to succeed.

Monopolizing your Music: Ticketmaster and Live Nation to totally Blow Up Your Spot

by Bobby Cardos
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

I remember the days when getting a ticket to a show meant going to the venue box office, lining up hours before they went on sale and competing with hundreds of other superfans for tickets a la Doug Funnie in that episode where he met the Beets.

Okay, so it was never like that. For the entirety of your ticket-purchasing life, you probably bought your tickets online. If you bought them at a box office, the person who gave you your tickets did exactly what you would do online except they would also hand you a printed ticket instead of waiting for it in the mail. And though none of us have memories of beating a stranger half to death to get tickets to that Bloc Party show, this online process has still always sucked. And it's about to get worse.

Ticketmaster, the U.S. leading online ticket seller, and Live Nation, a major venue promoter and events coordinator, just got approval from the Department of Justice to go through with a merger that has been in the works for over a year. Holding an estimated 75-80% and

venience fees" and Live Nation will often add the cost of venue parking to their tickets, ignoring the fact that some people may, you know, carpool to shows.

The Department of Justice approved the merger with conditions meant to prevent what it saw as "anti-competitive" elements of the deal. You would think that, noticing blatant monopolistic elements in the print, the Department of Justice would simply block the merger. And you would be wrong. Instead, the DOJ made Ticketmaster license its software to Comcast, one of its competitors (whatever that means when you have just acquired half of the 20-25% of the market you didn't already have), and function under "tough antiretaliation provisions" for the first 10 years after the merger.

The DOJ ignored the fact that Ticketmaster has exclusivity contracts with the venues it works with. Only 20% of these contracts expire in 2011, the rest later, which means that any competitors (like the emerging company Ticketfly) have to bide their time until these contracts expire to even have a *chance* of breaking into the market with any seriousness. Their inves-

And while competition between two exploitative corporations isn't exactly consumer friendly, creating a market where the consumer completely lacks options isn't going to make things any better.

This approval comes only days after the Supreme Court decision on Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission granted corporations power to help fund political campaigns (see page 5), and, albeit to a lesser degree, reflects the frightening extent to which our government has provided legal validation to companies, who were doing just fine overriding the public all by themselves. To stay within the concert industry, this merger seems to be one more kick at a music industry that is already having enough trouble with record sales. Operating under the safe assumption that the deal will yield higher ticket prices, it is going to become increasingly difficult for emerging artists and venues to sell out shows. Likewise, it becomes unreasonably expensive for younger music fans with limited budgets to see live music, an essential element to any artistic community, especially in a time where artists have



ticket line for The Eagles: 2010

10-15% of the U.S. ticketing market, respectively, a merger means that the companies would have essentially total control of the ticketing market and a large majority of the production market.

Few venues, and even fewer artists, have spoken in approval of this merger. Zero turned Zeitgeist, Pumpkin turned Zwan turned back to Pumpkin Billy Corgan testified before congress on behalf of the merger, presenting a statement that used trigger words like "synergy" and "sustainable,"—but this is also a man who's manager is the CEO of Ticketmaster and who has lately taken to cultism via the blogosphere. Both he and the companies claim that their merger will result in better and more affordable services. This makes sense, since Ticketmaster is notorious for making your ticket prices as much as 50% higher after "con-

tigation also excluded the examination of TicketsNow.com, the Ticketmaster owned ticket reseller that essentially represents the company's entrée into the scalping world, where have even been accusations that the company will withhold a number of tickets for high profile events to sell through the reseller, allowing them to make outrageous profit margins on events by scalping their own tickets.

And now these people have almost total control over your concert-going experience, complete with the seal of approval of your U.S. government. True, a month prior the U.K. approved the merger of the companies, but in the U.K. Ticketmaster, even with Live Nation, only holds about half of the ticketing market. In the U.S. Live Nation was that competition, or at least had the most potential to be.

come to rely on touring and live performances to stave off dwindling record sales.

Unfortunately, the time for preventing this is over, and the means to combat it are fledgling at best (as mentioned before, Ticketfly is one new attempt to sell tickets online without outrageous surcharges, but its venue reach is still too small to have a huge impact). Hopefully, as the exclusivity contracts with Ticketmaster expire, venues will investigate better, consumer friendly means of ticketing. Until then, those of us who want to support the musicians we love are also going to have to reluctantly support the corporations who make their concerts possible.

To stay abreast of the continuing efforts to combat this merger, go to www.ticketdisaster.org.

Be a Fat Lady

One reader's testament to the late J.D. Salinger

by Kaitlin Campbell
ARTS CO-EDITOR

On January 27th, around 4 pm, I was packing up my things in the library, planning to get a bagel from the deli and take a nap before my next class, when my friend casually pipes from her computer, "Oh, did you know J.D. Salinger died?" I don't think Caroline was prepared for the showy display of baffled exclamations, nervous pacing and dramatic gesticulations which immediately followed my reading the last sentence in the Times article reporting his death, before I could answer her: "Well, now I do."

I could claim I didn't take the news personally, but I then would be lying to myself. Ask anyone: I was out of it that day – and I couldn't avoid telling everyone I ran into exactly why. "J.D. Salinger died," I informed a passerby. "J.D. Salinger died," I told my mom on the phone. "J.D. Salinger died," I told them all, but I couldn't tell them how I really felt about it.

As I continued the scheduled events of my day, the more I proclaimed Salinger's death in a tone of earth-shattering importance, the more I realized I had not a clue why it was so important to me. I treated every attempt at explaining "why," with the same defensive disposition I've always held whenever someone has asked "why" I read Salinger. Caught in a fool-proof pride that I possessed something personally unique and special, I could only communicate that my love of Salinger was something passerbys, my mother, and even my friends "just wouldn't understand."

Alone, though, away from the judgment and misguided pressures of expectation which Salinger described so accurately, and that he himself escaped from, I answered the "why."

J.D. Salinger's dead, and I'm getting old.

There has always been an element of guilt in loving Salinger past the adolescent years during which many of his fans cultivate their attachments to his writing – "Grow up," we'd like to tell ourselves, "get over yourself." Taking one look at the literary criticism directed at Salinger after "Hapworth 16, 1924" was published in 1965 – the last work in his public career – you'd find that the literary world echoed these sentiments.

a member of Salinger's Glass family whose seven children appear scattered throughout his collected short stories. Franny's brief but provocative character development in the stories "Franny" and "Zooney" which were published together in one book, became a model I drew for myself to grow within. Her proud dissatisfaction with her trite boyfriend, shallow college professors and her own acting career partnered with her overarching spiritual preoccupations which render her helplessly

lost in her own limited awareness rendered me helplessly empathetic to this fragile character. There was one thing about Franny though, that I could never understand – why she accepted her brother Zooney's reasons for her to appreciate her boyfriend and college professors, to pursue her acting, and to abandon her spiritual preoccupations --and why, in the last line of "Zooney," she simply "lay quiet, smiling at the ceiling."

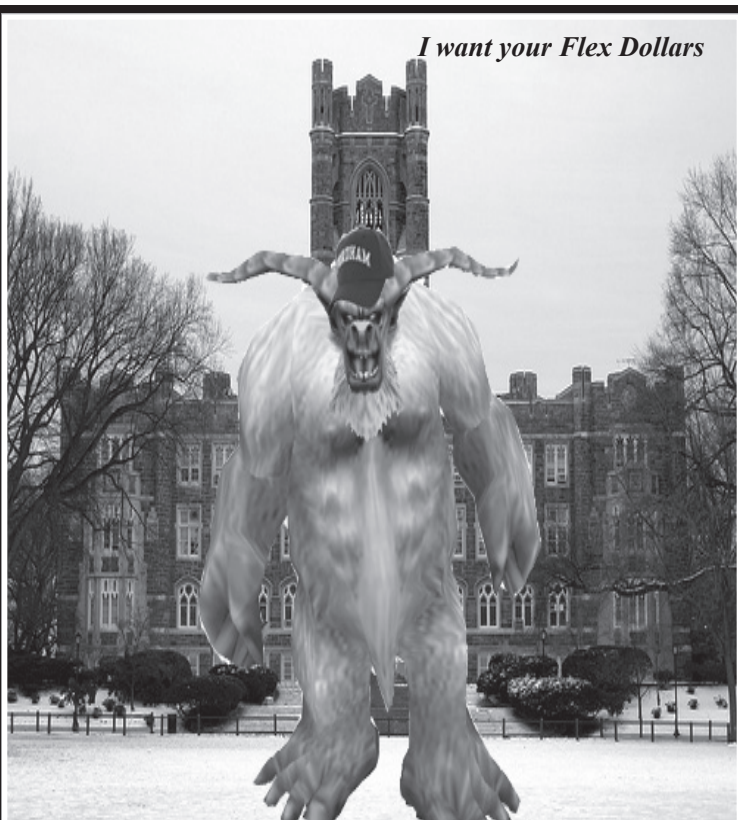
Since Salinger's death, in observing my own reaction

to it and in trying to answer "why" I read Salinger, I might have figured out why Franny was able to simply lay quiet and smile at the ceiling. She grew up, she got over herself. The limited awareness she was helplessly lost in, under the guise of spiritual importance, only limited her ability to find anything important. And it was only through her brother, an other she felt more thoroughly understood her than her trite boyfriends and shallow professors, showed her the worth of others. The next time anyone asks me "why" I love Salinger, I might say "he showed me the worth of others," or I could simply point to suggestions for further reading. In any case, I have grown up enough to not assume that they "just wouldn't understand."

But literary criticism on Salinger, to me, was just more attacks on my personal love of his work –and these people had heavy artillery. The precious creation of "Zooney," a short story I'd formed an endearing attachment to was "an interminable [and] an appallingly bad story," to Maxwell Geismar and, click-load-fire, "a piece of shapeless self-indulgence" to George Steiner. I naturally defended myself against these invasions with the same tight-lipped haughty face I brandished on the day of his death, called them all phonies, and nursed my love for Salinger in secret – reading everything he wrote that I could find, and everything written about him in selfishly-indulgent silence.

I liked to think I particularly could relate to Franny Glass,

Look, there's no other pictures of him online, OK?



I know it's cold as Daddy Mac's heart outside and you're all deep in hibernation, abusing your recently replenished Flexible Fordham Fun Money, but you really should get off the couch/bed and venture into the city these next few weeks; Febraury is ripe with amazing bands playing relatively cheap shows, including a FREE one at our very own Rodrigue's Coffeehouse. 'nough said, ya lazy snowbums. -MM

Who: The Magnetic Fields

When: Saturday, 2/13

Where: Brooklyn Academy of Music

How Much: \$25

Why: Seasoned veterans of not-quite-electro-pop-synth The Magnetic Fields return to the city promoting their new album, Realism, with (perhaps) a little more optimism. The stream of sarcasm normally dripping from Stephen Merritt's voice has been reduced to a trickle, leaning more towards folk than he has in years past. Sort of. The band still remains the vaguely sad and mostly insincere champions of irony; their tour will be as solid as always.

Who: A Million Years

When: Friday, 2/19

Where: Rodrigue's Coffeehouse

How Much: FREE!

Why: FREE CONCERT ON CAMPUS should be reason enough but if you picky whiners need more... A Million Years is a fledgling, Brooklyn-based quartet that's been haunting venues throughout the five boroughs with an energy and freshman grittiness reminiscent of NYC lovechild, the Strokes. You likely don't know their name yet, but that doesn't mean they can't throw down (and all you have to do is walk next to the deli and pay no money).

Who: The Dropkick Murphys

When: Wednesday, 2/24

Where: The Wellmont Theatre

How Much: \$30

Why: You might say I like the Dropkick Murphys because I'm a ginger with a name that is Irish for "drunkard". And you would be partially right. However, you can't ignore the appeal of an angry Celtic-accented tirade squalling overtop epic riffs, punching drumbeats, and bagpipes (always awesome). Irish music is always great to embarrassingly mosh around and sing loudly with a nice beer coat on, blindly swinging your head and fisting the air as any true 'mick' would on any given night of the week.

Who: Wild Beasts

When: Saturday, 2/28

Where: Music Hall of Williamsburg

How Much: \$15

Why: The Wild Beasts have made it onto almost every "Best of 2009" compilation I've encountered in the past two months, and rightly so: they're bringing back glam-rock in a beautifully low key manner, eschewing the typical excessive antics (sup, David Bowie) for a ghostly falsetto echoing in and around a pulsating, softly thumping groove. They howl and moan and the melody shivers and shudders and shimmers and all of a sudden it's the quietest jungle anarchy you've ever heard. This is absolutely a band to watch, and for \$15 you have no reason to skip it.

Na'vi means "almost" in Klingon

Avatar is stuck in Samsara

by Alex Kelso
STAFF SPACE SMURF

Pocahontas. That's what I kept thinking the entire time I was watching James Cameron's *Avatar*. Don't get me wrong, I thought *Avatar* was one of the finest action movies this year and I was entertained throughout the film -- but that's just it. I was entertained. I paid to for almost three hours of some of the best cinematography and Sci-Fi I have seen since *Star Trek*. The acting was decent and Sigourney Weaver can still show the new kids how to do a good action Sci-Fi movie. That and she looks great for someone in her early sixties. Overall it was a good popcorn movie and deserves the billions it has made. Now explain to me how it's been nominated for an Academy

Award for Best Picture when *Star Trek* only gets nominations for technical categories. I don't see how an incredibly well-done movie that may revitalize a franchise and had an original plot is being beaten by *Fern Gully* meets Smurfs in space.

The major problem I had with *Avatar* is the plot. I knew the plot just from watching the trailers. SPOILER ALERT! Disabled marine goes to other planet. Marine becomes alien and meets alien girl. Marine and alien start hitting it off and he must learn the ways of the tribe. Corporate guy and Marine Colonel are dicks and decide to wipe out aliens. Marine must choose between love/good side/nature against his own species/people. That is more or less the plot of three other movies: *Fern Gully*, *Pocahontas*, and *Dances*

with Wolves. James Cameron recycled old, worn out plots and stuck them in a fantastic setting. He wasted the movie. I'm angrier over the wasted opportunity than the plot itself. Cameron has announced plans to make a second movie. Hopefully he'll use that opportunity to do something a little more original.

My second issue with *Avatar* is the way that it crams its message down our throats. If you are one of the few people that hasn't seen it yet, the main themes are Anti-Iraq War, environmentalism, and respect for indigenous people. I personally have no issues with any of the themes of the movie and I support them. However, after a while they get a little old when presented so bluntly. All I ask for in movies is a little subtlety. This is an issue I have with

the movie industry in general. Make me work a little for the message. Basically, my issue with *Avatar* overall is that it's worn out where it matters in a movie: the plot and message. It's the George Lucas Effect. When a director uses too much CGI and new technology he ignores the plot and script. J.J. Abrams is the only director I know of to escape this.

Avatar has also garnered a large fanbase. These fans are at the point where they have begun to speak the Na'vi language as if it were a real language. This is *Star Trek* level devotion. *Avatar* is exhibiting all the signs of a cult movie, without being a cult movie. It has even started Internet memes. I have no problem with films having large fanbases, I include myself in several, but they are band-waggoners.

To be a true movie/franchise fanboy/girl, it takes years of obsession and fandom, and the willingness to admit that you're being kind of a nerd.

Maybe I'm just a *Star Trek* fan that's bitter about the movie not being nominated for anything better than technical awards, but I feel that *Avatar* is being shown too much attention. Perhaps the fact that a Sci-Fi movie even got nominated for a big award will pave the way for future nominations, like Heath Ledger's nomination for *The Joker* last year for superhero movies. But in the end people will pay money for big explosions, stunningly beautiful environments, and an incredibly well constructed world, people, culture, and setting despite the recycled plot and blunt messages.



NOTE: IMAGES ARE NOT FROM THE SAME MOVIE

JAMES CAMERON: COOL NERD

by Eamon Stewart
STAFF CYBORG HEAD

If they weren't the most absurdly rich people on the planet, I'm pretty sure most Hollywood directors would not have any friends. If not for the millions he made, Tim Burton could be the middle-age equivalent of that kid from high school who stood across the street and smoked cigarettes in the morning attempting to be edgy. Michael Bay would be an idiot savant whose only gift was imagining inventive ways to blow things up, and Quentin Tarantino would still be a virgin. Their propensity to entertain us by preparing elements of their unusual niches in a large-scale, commercially-digestible format allows us to tolerate their weirdness. They give us books we would never read, television shows we would never watch, and films we would never rent. So, suddenly it is acceptable to be interested in these nerds, because everyone else is. And they make their studios a lot of fucking money. The relationship between director, audience, and studio is about to move into uncharted territory, and our guide for this journey will be James Cameron.

And seriously, why the fuck not? Cameron's latest film, the special-effect-alien-robot war-bonanza known as *Avatar*, has by conservative estimates

grossed more than the GDP of most Eastern Bloc countries (including those big ones like Russia). If there is a man with the financial collateral to do this, it's Cameron. But the stakes are too high for what he is now attempting, and the inherent dorkiness of his current projects will still be too dorky to cover the astronomical budgets we all know he'll need to make these films.

Based on the title, James Cameron's next film should scream of masculinity and awesomeness: *Battle Angel* (which he will be writing and directing). We know that pure testosterone-violence cannot be the end of the story with Cameron, as his most praised action films (*Terminators 1 and 2*; *Aliens*) are acclaimed not for their excessive violence but for the touches of humanity found in them (the underlying motif of both *Terminators* is the selflessness of mother protecting her child -- and when Sigourney Weaver of *Aliens* fights a matriarchal Queen Alien instead of a patriarchal figure it represents who matters most in a species' ability to survive). *Battle Angel* would contain those elements of classic-Cameron storytelling, but there are two snags: its source material is based on Japanese manga and its plot is totally fucking stupid.

Manga, like most popular entertainment things in Japan,

are never successful in America outside of the ten year-old demographic (I'm talking about you, *Pokémon* and *Dragon Ball Z*). The idea that enough people (remember since this is a Cameron movie, this is a lot of people) are going to get excited about a movie based on manga is a little far-fetched, since the average person's response towards manga isn't exactly enthusiastic. In the realm of nerd pastimes, manga reigns somewhere at the top with crap like *World of Warcraft*. It's a daunting task for Cameron, and he also has to deal with the inherent stupidity of what he will be adapting.

From what I gathered from summaries, *Battle Angel* takes place in the 26th century and tells the story of a doctor who finds a cyborg head in a junkyard and rebuilds her. Somehow she magically knows Kung Fu and then has to beat up a lot of people because she has spiritual powers. Raise your hand if this sounds

like the plot to an Uwe Boll movie. I thought so. People have accused Cameron of giving thin plots to his past films, but this is different. Whereas

served as a breather from.

And why not go down that road if you're Cameron? If he's now the director of the two highest grossing films of all time,

why should he give a shit? Go ahead: show me a movie about a cyborg girl made of pieces of garbage that fights gangsters and angelic beings. And make it as fucking expensive as you want.

Which he will. He has already said that *Avatar* served as the testing ground to see if 3-D film technology could become massively popular. Which it now is. So here we go. Apparently *Avatar* was just the beginning of our journey into Hollywood nerd-dom, and now that our dear expedition leader Captain Fucking Cameron



Gimme gimme more (hands)

Avatar may have lacked originality, it did not have a plot seemingly written by a committee of twelve year olds. There should be considerable fear that Cameron will take an awful turn and make these kinds of action movies which he has frequently

knows the terrain is safe, he is going to lead us further into this unknown land. He knows the studios will follow him, but isn't so sure about the audience. Although we may follow him in the end, he shouldn't be so sure that there will be enough of us.

Your Picasso Is Worth A Lot Less With A Hole In It

by Emily Tuttle
STAFF FAIL

Tripping and falling in any public place has the potential for embarrassment—particularly when that place is the Metropolitan Museum of Art and your landing pad is an incredibly expensive piece by Picasso. On Friday, January 22nd, a woman attending night classes at the Met fell into Picasso's "The Actor," denting the canvas and causing a six-inch vertical tear in the lower right-hand corner. The 1905 painting is unusually large for the period at 6-by-4 foot, and features a tall, thin actor on stage in an eye-catching pink and blue costume. Uninjured, save her dignity, the unidentified woman is said to have reduced the estimated \$130 million value of the painting by about 50% in one foul swoop. Shocking as this was for the art world, this woman joined what is in fact a long tradition of irreplaceable art pieces suffering at the hand of the clumsy masses.

As recently as 2006, a different Picasso piece titled "Le Rêve" was torn by Las Vegas casino owner Stephen A. Wynn. Wynn was purportedly showing off the valuable painting to

some impressive guests when he gestured a bit too fervently and stuck his elbow through the painting. Although the hole was expertly repaired, it proved to be a pricey, yet probably deserved, mistake—its pending \$139 million sale to art dealer Steven Cohen was immediately called off.

Incredible clumsiness is often the cause of these unfortunate missteps. Nick Flynn is perhaps the most shining example of this tragic flaw. In 2006, Flynn bent to tie his shoes at the top of a staircase in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. He immediately tripped over a loose lace and fell down a flight of stairs into three Qing Dynasty vases. Surrounded by nearly 400 pieces of broken pottery, Flynn was arrested on suspicion of criminal damage but eventually the charges were dropped. Flynn had been visiting the museum while unemployed due to a back injury, but strangely suffered no injuries from his epic fall. He is no longer welcome back in the museum. Illness also plays a considerable factor in these incidents. In 2004, a sick patron fell at a Noguchi Exhibition in Sapporo, Japan, taking an expensive bronze sculpture

called "Wakai-Hito" down with him. "Venus Forge," a modern art piece by Carl Andre featuring a collection of steel and copper tiles on the ground, recently suffered an even larger indignity at the Tate Britain in London. In 2007, a child visiting the museum became ill and vomited over a significant portion of the work.

Modern art is assuredly just as confusing for museum workers as it is for many of its viewers. In 2001, Damien Hurt's piece "Untitled" was accidentally completely discarded of by a custodian. The tableau included half-full coffee cups, empty beer bottles, candy wrappers,

and ash trays with cigarette butts, and was justifiably swept up by this meticulous janitor.

The museum staff was forced to go dumpster-diving to retrieve the remains of the expensive work of art. Some damage to artwork is a bit more purposeful. Anger is a powerful force to overcome, as was the case with Agnolo Bronzino's painting "An Allegory with Venus and Cupid". In 2003 a man punched the 16th-century work during its time in the National Gallery at Trafalgar Square, leaving a considerable dent.

The most fantastic example of museum visitation gone wrong took place in 2006 at the Milwaukee Art Museum. A not-too-bright event planner decided to hold a "MartiniFest" in a gallery amidst very pricey works of art. Guests could pay a flat \$30 fee and drink as much as they would like for the en-

tirety of the night. The event predictably deteriorated into a drink-up that Fordham students couldn't possibly hope to match. Adults got incredibly inebriated over the course of the night, even vomiting, starting fights, and passing out in the gallery. But the highlight of the night for the drunken revelers was climbing the statues placed throughout the gallery. A particularly violated piece was Gaston Lachaise's "Standing Woman," a seven-foot tall, voluptuous bronze statue who was climbed, vomited on, and, allegedly, groped.

Luckily, with advances in restoration the majority of these pieces and others who suffered a similar fate were expertly repaired. The outlook is bright for the restoration of "The Actor's" gash, which is conveniently located away from the focus of the composition. While there are possible complications, including questions of a double lining and even Picasso's use of a recycled canvas, the Met is confident of its recovery. After a few months of careful work, the tear should be reduced to a barely visible line in time for the Picasso exhibition scheduled to open in April.



Tay Sway: Not Just a Guilty Pleasure

by Nick Murray
STAFF NOT ASHAMED

In the three and a half years since the release of her eponymous debut album, Taylor Swift has crossed-over in just about every way possible. From country to pop, from pop to indie, audiences of both genders, all ages and all but a few contrarians have sung along to "You Belong With Me"'s monster hook at least once. Perhaps more remarkably, Swift has transcended the guilty pleasure category even moreso than Kelly Clarkson did with 2004's "Since U Been Gone". In fact, it might be appropriate to call Swift, along with her polar opposite Lady Gaga, the first stars of the post-guilty pleasure era.

Before I continue, I should take a moment to talk about this thing we call a guilty pleasure. At this point in time it has become even more cliché to dismiss these phenomena ("Why should I feel guilty about the things I like?") than to use them to justify the fact the fact that you find the latest song penned by Dr. Luke or Max Martin catchy. Thinking about this subject more than any sane person should, I've come up with three explanations why people might feel embarrassed to enjoy a pop song.

The most obvious answer—and probably the most relevant in the case of the particular

strand of pop music I'm discussing here—has something to do with a fear of deviating too far from heteronormative standards of gender and sexuality, particularly those concerning masculinity. It's not a coincidence that when you hear someone describing a song as a guilty pleasure, that someone is usually a guy and the song is usually teenpop (read: embarrassing). For whatever reason, "ironically" liking "Party in the U.S.A." protects one's masculine identity more than just admitting that it's a great song and catchy and energetic and fun.

The second reason is slightly more ubiquitous yet slightly more complicated, and more or less still in the hypothesis stage. To put it in as few words as possible, the guilty pleasure is an extension of class struggle. Ultimately, this has the same effect and allows one to slum in the tastes of the masses by liking say, Toby Keith's "Beer for My Horses,"

yet maintain a distance by acknowledging that it isn't really good music (as opposed to Grizzly Bear or Kid Cudi or whom-

ever). The last explanation is largely an extension of this class struggle and takes the form of a reactionary response to an anti-intellectualism the guilty pleasure-holder believes to be held by the masses who listen to pop

music. By association, this anti-intellectualism comes to be seen as a quality of the music itself. If nothing else, it's punished for

not having the self-congratulatory surface intellectualism of your favorite backpack rap.

But I digress. The success of Taylor Swift and Lady Gaga (together their 2009 album sales easily surpassed 5 million) suggests that the growing number of people claiming not to have guilty pleasures may be serious. The success of these two artists may have something to do with Swift's super-earnestness and, conversely, Gaga's endless posturing, but for today's purposes it seems fair to say that it's simply because both make great music.

Still, being the first post-guilty pleasure pop stars is sometimes not all it's cracked up to be. Sure people will enjoy your music and find your tweets adorable and feel bad for you when Kanye West upstages your VMA acceptance

speech, but those people will often still maintain a certain amount of distance from your songs, probably the last grasp of that anti-anti-intellectualism (Gaga somewhat avoids this by inviting overanalysis of just about all of her actions). Although a large number of people will finally admit to liking Taylor Swift, many of these pop dilettantes almost justify their pleasure as if it comes in spite of the music, or more particularly, in spite of the lyrics. "They're dopey," they'll say (actually, no they won't, because no one says "dopey" anymore), and they'll be half right.

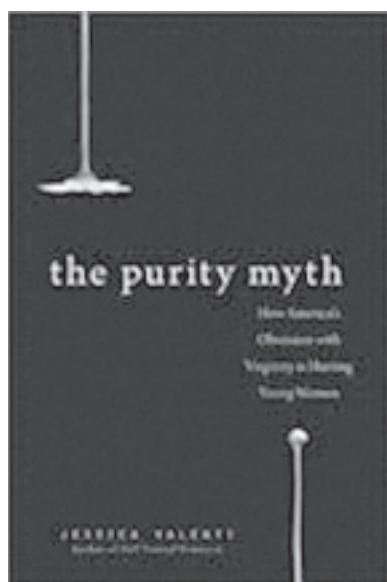
Swift is probably her dopi-est on "Fifteen," Fearless's fifth single, when she sings, "And then you're on your very first date and he's got a car/ And you're feeling like flying," yet such lyrics stand up in comparison to similarly-themed tunes such as The Replacement's "Sixteen Blue" and look remarkably strong when compared to canonized camp like The Beach Boys' "Be True to Your School." In reality, there's probably no other honest way to talk the middle teenage years of one's life. Still, such minor complaints are a small price to pay when Swift's singles are still on the radio over a year after the release of Fearless, and she's still posting those adorable tweets.





Jessica Valenti is one of the ass kicking-est young women in today's feminist movement. After graduating from Rutgers with a Masters degree in Women's and Gender Studies and breaking into mainstream women's organizations like NARAL and NOW, Jessica wanted to "create a space where younger feminist voices were really the center." Her solution was Feministing.com: a blog "for and by" young feminists. Now the most active hub of feminist activity online, Feministing provides smart, poignant, and hilarious analysis on topics as wide-ranging as vagina-shaped urinals to *Roe v. Wade*. Besides her own blog, she has written for *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *Salon.com*, and a handful of other major publications and is now a best-selling author and winner of the 2010 Amelia Bloomer award.

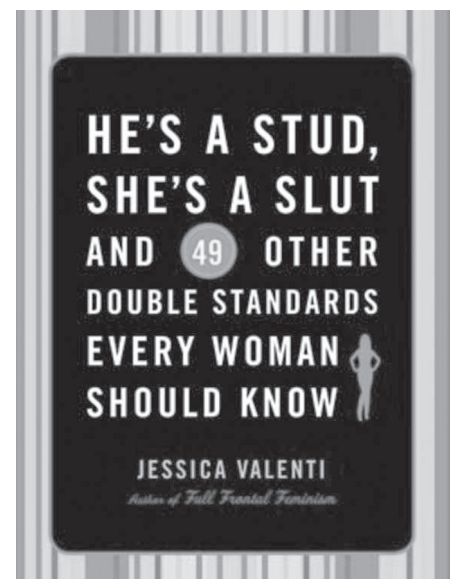
Jessica has stumped for feminism everywhere from the *Today Show* to *The Colbert Report* and, February 18, she'll be kicking ass and taking names right here at Fordham. Before she blows us all away next Thursday, *the paper* staff is here to show you why we love Jessica Valenti.



The Purity Myth

The Purity Myth is Jessica's most recent book, and, at a time in which the United State's teen pregnancy rate has risen for the first time in more than a decade (according to a recent study published by the Guttmacher Institute), it is arguably her most important work to date. Valenti's book is a full-fledged take down of a concept she calls "the purity myth," that is, the idea that a young woman's worth is determined by her virginity, or lack thereof. She writes, "It's time to teach our daughters that their ability to be good people depends on their being good people, not whether or not they're sexually active."

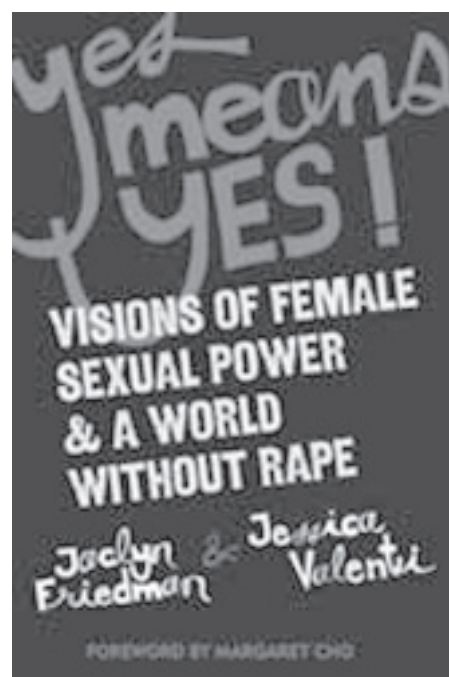
True to form, Valenti's book is funny and edgy, and incredibly well researched and informative. From the reprehensible and dangerous practice of abstinence-only education (here's to you, Fordham) to the disturbing themes of father-daughter ownership and the sexualization of pre-teens found in purity balls, to legislation that punishes young women that dare to have sex, Valenti finds that the purity myth is all around us. Young women are constantly barraged by media and pop culture messages that urge them to be sexy and desirable, but if young women actually have sex, well then they're whores. Virgin or not, young women in America are sex objects precisely because their worth is measured by their sexuality. Valenti details this problem, its sources, and possible solutions in a way that any young woman can relate to. This is feminist non-fiction at its best: it leaves you shocked, angered, and ready to do something about it.



feministing.com

Feministing.com

I can't remember exactly when I started down that long, winding cyber-path into the depths of the feminist blog-o-sphere. All I know is that there was a time— perhaps junior year of high school— when words like 'transmisogyny,' and 'intersectionality' (and 'blog-o-sphere') were not in my vocabulary. Shocking, I know, especially in consideration of my passionate, sometimes-drunken rants. Thankfully, at some point during my senior year I found myself on Feministing.com. Divided between a community blog and a main page featuring an array of rising authors and activists, Feministing provides perhaps the broadest news coverage and commentary of any progressivist, feminist site. Click through the links and you'll find yourself farther down the rabbit hole— at an ecofeminist blog, a womanist news site, or even a lesbian separatist literature archive. To this day, feministing is still internet-feminism's main portal, and it's become real-life-feminism's major sounding board for young activists— perhaps founder Jessica Valenti's biggest accomplishment.



Yes Means Yes

Yes Means Yes is an anthology Valenti co-edited, along with feminist activist and writer Jaclyn Friedman. The contributors to the book will be familiar to any follower of the feminist blogosphere— women like Kate Harding (of *Salon*), Latoya Peterson (of *Racialicious*), and Jill Filipovic (of *Feministe*). The overarching theme of this book is rape culture, a concept that we have tackled in the paper many times. According to the book *Transforming a Rape Culture*, "A rape culture is a complex of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women...In a rape culture both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life, inevitable as death or taxes." *Yes Means Yes* not only looks to expose the rape culture that we live in, it seeks to transform the discussion of rape culture by framing sex as a positive thing, something that women should not be ashamed of, something that is a source of power for women, not over women.

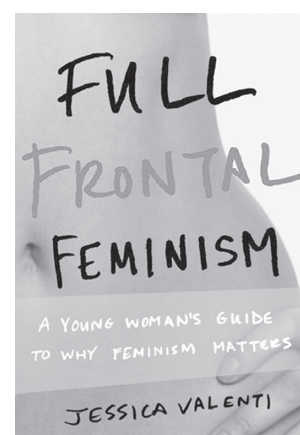


Full Frontal Feminism

Full Frontal Feminism is Valenti's first book, published in 2007, three years after she founded feministing.com. This book hits you —my friend Caroline let me borrow it, assuring me "it would change my life," and before I could say she was exaggerating, I read the first chapter and was instantly captured by Valenti's blunt presentation of startling facts and her blunt quips about why we should care about them. "You're a hardcore feminist, I swear," she immediately told me, and I was shortly in total agreement.

Valenti first addresses many common misinterpretations about feminism, and many women's own aversion to it —feminists are men-hating, ugly, and loud. Or, feminists are old white ladies and that feminism has already achieved its goal since women have "pretty much" equal rights. She responds to these views with powerful common sense — feminism is empowering and not negatively based on "antis," "Ugly and loud," are subjective terms and women don't need others to tell them who they are, and the stereotypes about old white ladies and dead-feminism are scare-tactics made to shut us all up. She brings up a damn good question for women: Why would we want to continue believing there is always something wrong with us? This book proves what she asserts in the first chapter —"There's nothing wrong with you [ladies]!" From reproductive rights to the prison of pop culture ideas; sexist policies to tips for a better sex life; and the degrading stereotypes of both women and men — Jessica Valenti points the finger-of-blame outward, provoking us to go beyond blaming, and start correcting.

FEBRUARY 18
KEATING FIRST



DOORS OPEN
6:30 PM

the paper's big list

WHAT THE PAPER IS SELLING AT THE SUPERBOWL



by *the paper*
STAFF OF MILLIONS
SEVERAL

Do you smell bratwurst on the grill? Hear those beer bottles click-clacking together in the cooler? See the obese men's gold-painted breasts flapping wildly in the wind? Why, of course you do, Fordham: it's Superbowl Sunday! Or, at least, it is currently Superbowl Sunday as your *paper* staff slaves over its first issue of the new semester.

Although we here at *the paper* are deeply dedicated to this most major of sporting holidays (which will not be covered in this week's Sports section because, well, we cut the Sports section), this year our eyes have been fixed on the corporate side of the event. After years of enforcing a strict "no advocacy ad policy," CBS allowed the anti-abortion group Focus on the Family to run ads during its Superbowl coverage. The network claims that its decision to run the anti-choice ads was not at all political. In light of CBS's rejection of ads for liberal groups like moveon.org and the LGBT-accepting United Church of Christ, advocacy groups, media watchdogs, and most savvy individuals have responded with a polite "Bullshit."

This controversy has us at *the paper* thinking. If we could follow the example of Focus on the Family and waste millions of dollars on totally stupid Superbowl ads, what would we pitch to CBS?

Teddy-Bear Gun

The Superbowl features tons of inventive commercials every year, but no one has ever been inventive enough to market an abstract noun in tandem with their actual product...until now. I'd like to see a commercial advertising both nonviolence (or at least creative violence) as a commodity, and teddy bears. Sunamiya, a paint firm based in Imabari, Japan provides both of these things with their new creation that catapults cuddly things into the air.

It's called a teddy bear gun, and it does exactly what it sounds like it does. You simply pull the trigger and a tiny teddy bear is propelled out of the gun's barrel, equipped with a parachute so that it flows gracefully back down to earth, as all projectile teddy bears should. In America these teddy bear guns would bring about quite a different application than the current Japanese usage at weddings (they throw bears in lieu of

throwing rice or blowing bubbles) but we could get imaginative too. Just think of the playground possibilities, comical burglary attempts, and the new school-time threats, like: "Don't make me shoot stuffed bears at you, dweeb!!" And even if you don't want one for yourself... who wouldn't want to watch a minute and a half of Japanese men in business suits shooting pink plush bears at each other to show off their product? Plus, think of the hilarious opportunities with translation or overdubbing: "All your bears are belong to us?"

By: Sarah Madges
EARWAX EDITOR



Large Hadron Collider

I thought that The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) should have paid for an advertisement to raise awareness for the Large Hadron Collider, the particle-smasher that's supposed to answer the Big Questions, like "What was the nature of the quark-gluon plasma in the early universe?" and "How many licks does it take to get to the tootsie role center of a Tootsie Pop?" Interest has dwindled since its introduction because of a few logistical setbacks, and really, the CERN needs to let people know that it's still there, ready and waiting to throw atoms at one another and just kinda see what happens. The ad would depict a video of two footballs being shot at each other from opposite ends of the machine. When they collide, the pigskins would explode outwards into a football stadium, from which would come the planets, the solar system, the universe. We would hear the ref's whistle, the roar of the crowd, and a booming voice: "What if in the beginning, there was football? We can find out. We have the

power." Fade to black. Cue up sexy Bud Light commercial. If that doesn't get people captivated with atomic physics, then I, for one, have no hope for this planet.

By: Bobby Cardos
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

Pot

Booze, booze, booze. That's what the big game is all about. Booze and chicken wings. And ladies' breasts. It is no secret that the formula booze + chicken wings + ladies' breasts = massive commercial appeal. We've done the homework, Fordham. We've studied the stats.

Coincidentally, the most suc-

cessful commercials that air during the Super Bowl generally have to deal with booze and ladies' breasts. Chicken wings, not so much. But you can be sure some schmuck somewhere is letting loose a primordial "YEAAAHH" with chicken wing sauce smeared over his face as he gazes lovingly at a pair of ladies' breasts selling booze. But I digress. I am straying from my point.

...Which is, there are a hella lotta commercials during the Super Bowl that deal directly with two vices many stuffed shirts would claim are contrary to American values: Alcohol and Sex. Why, I must ask, is marijuana not invited to the party? Our news media and government would like to make us believe a little bit o' reefer will corrupt Amurica and turn all that catch a whiff of its potent deliciousness gay and liberal (actually totally true). Certainly this is contrary to American values, so why not let the greenest grass catch some face time along with those other two crooked sins? For shame!

big game. One dude says to the other: "Yo dawg, wanna know what would make this even better?"

The other: "What could possibly make watching the game with my main homie better?"

The first: "This!" **pulls out joint, an explosion of green smoke fills the room with chicken wings, Doritos, ladies' breasts, and unopened beers the dudes are too stoned to drink. The Philadelphia Phanatic and Wally the Green Monster also appear, for obvious reasons.**

Imagine it. Everybody in America would instantaneously start smoking the ganja. Conservatism would crumble and since

everyone would be too stoned to drink, drunk driving would cease immediately. Downside: America's prisons would be bursting at the seams.

By: Rolly Donagan
STAFF STONE-WALL JACKSON

Kitten Mittons!!

"Emily Genetta here, local business owner and cat enthusiast. Is your cat making TOO MUCH NOISE all the time?!? Is your cat constantly stomping around, DRIVING YOU CRAZY?!?! [cut to cat stomping around, Godzilla noise in background] Is your cat CLAWING at your FURNITURES? [cut to leopard mauling antelope] Think there's no answer? You're SO STUPID!!! There is: Kitten mittons!!! [cut to cat in booties] Finally, there's an ELEGANT, COMFORTABLE mitton for cats! [cut to cat walking on table in booties; falling off table, cricket noises in background] I couldn't hear ANYTHING!!! Is YOUR cat one-legged? Is YOUR cat fat, skinny, or an in-between? It doesn't matter, 'cause one size fits all!!! [cut to cat, waving at camera with my assistance] KITTEN MITTONS: You'll be SMITTEN!!! So come on down to PADDY'S PUB— we're the HOOOOOOOME of the original kitten mittons! [thumbs up!!!] ME-OOOWWWW!! [sexyface]"

By: Emily Genetta
EXECUTIVE CO-EDITOR

Personal Ads

One thing that the Super Bowl advertising line up has a lamentable scarcity of is personal ads. Just consider the possibilities: increased revenue for the network, loads and loads

of publicity as hordes of people with FAR too much disposable income clamor to nab a coveted 10-15 second spot, and the ingenuity and cleverness with which someone would present their personal image when they know that millions upon millions will see it. This could be big. Like, "WAAZZZUPP?!" big.

So, I've decided that after I build a vast fortune from claiming the Great Pacific Garbage Patch as my own sovereign nation and attracting tourists from all over Oceania, I will take out a 30 second personal ad during the Super Bowl. It will feature a slow music montage (song: "More Than a Feeling by Boston") of me doing things like hang-gliding and wrestling large animals interspersed with short shots of my sensitive side (i.e. stretching out on a bearskin rug, playfully tossing around suds in a bathtub, etc.). As the music slowly fades, the camera will zoom in on an amazing – nay, nearly impossible – touchdown catch followed by a big tumble into the end zone. As the unknown player stands up and removes his helmet, the camera will zoom fast to reveal my face (on a heavily digitally enhanced body), smiling and glistening with sweat. I will utter the solitary phrase "Call me," wink seductively, then rejoin my teammates on the field for boyish camaraderie. Foolproof.

By: Sean Kelly
EXECUTIVE CO-EDITOR

Big Money Rustlas

Some people love to kick back to a Western on Turner Classic Movies. Some people love the horrorcore musical stylings of Insane Clown Posse. Finally, these two groups can come together for the Juggalo Western *Big Money Rustlas*.

A Psycopathic Records Presentation, the film presents a "deadly tale of debauchery, hedonism, and family love" in which ICP's Joseph "Violent J" Bruce, Joseph "Shaggy 2 Dope" Utsler, and an array of other lovable, gun-totin' Juggalos toot-and-holler their way through the Wild Wild West. Advertising this cinematic masterpiece during the Superbowl would take mainstream America to a world beyond professional football, Bud Light, and *Two and a Half Men* and introduce its polo-shirt sporting population to the beauty of cowboy boots and black and white facepaint. As Jack Donaghy would say, "That, my friend, is synergy in action."

By: Marisa Carroll
FEATURES EDITOR



On February 1st in L.A., an atrocity to help relieve Haiti's atrocity occurred. That is, 81 of music's biggest celebs recorded a charity remake of "We Are the World," which was originally released by famous folks like Michael Jackson and Bob Dylan for famine relief in Africa. This endeavor could raise mad money for Haitians suffering the earthquake's aftermath. As RedOne said, "I have Haitian friends and stuff like that, but we're going to be helping people that need help right now." Lil Wayne, Kanye West, Celine Dion, Wyclef, Good Charlotte's Madden bros, and Miley Cyrus, for chrissakes, were among those who shouldn't have ever convened in one studio, and reportedly went for "a more modern Southern hip-hop bounce," whatever that means. Maybe I'm being too cynical about a noble event, but you watch the Winter Olympics and tell me the world is better for it.

SPOON Transference by Eamon Stewart

Another Spoon album. Another slab of reliable, carefree pop rock that, at the very least, is difficult to dislike. They've been churning out this sound for a couple of albums, and at this point it seems less about trying to perfect the sound and more about tinkering with it by throwing a new instrument in on this song, or trying something just a little more punk, but not enough to deviate from their trademark sound. Every album has followed this pattern, and *Transference* more or less does too.

There is a new turn, however, not primarily with the songwriting, but with the production. With *Transference* the band took up the producing reins themselves, taking the quality of sounds in the opposite direction of *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga*'s now that they are in control. Whereas the previous album

had a slick, glossed over feel to it, the songs on *Transference* are striking in how lo-fi they sound. "Goodnight Laura" sounds like it was done in one take on a 4-track, and the drums throughout have clarity reminiscent of an Albini record. As far as production ethic goes, the band is dipping into the 80s post-punk and 90s indie rock, recording music in the most organic and natural-sounding way possible. Maybe they felt that *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga* sounded too distant, and that they wanted to inject some warmth, or maybe they just thought, "Let's try this now for the hell of it."

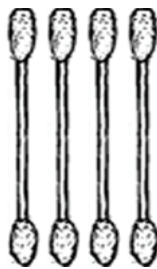
A little of that lo-fi mentality crept into the songwriting as well. "Out Go the Lights" sounds like it could have been written by Paul Westerberg, and "Got Nuffin" structurally bears a resemblance to early Fugazi, of all bands. But seeing that this is Spoon, you only get hints of other bands' sounds, and otherwise the songwriting is the same as every other album. There is the song with the catchy piano-led melody ("Written In Reverse"), the song with the bouncy and addictive bass line ("The Mystery Zone"), the really chilled out minimalist song ("Who Makes Your Money"), and all of Spoon's standard fare, with the lyrics delivered in Britt Daniel's intent yet not overdone vocals. The only song on the album that seems particularly unique is "Before Destruction," which has



an unusually grandiose feel for Spoon. This is compounded with the fact that it's the album's opener. Typically, bands open an album with something inviting and later work in the more challenging songs. Instead, the album begins by throwing a curveball, returning to familiar territory afterwards. It works as a nice change before the audience is given what they're used to.

This isn't to say that what we're used to is bad. It's still very good, and I'm still glad

to be hearing Spoon sound this way. They have a tightness to their music that's rewarding in a way that many other bands haven't captured (probably best is the Talking Heads). If they continue this formula, retreading the known with a few new hooks, people will keep listening to them. It's just too good to pass up.



EMANCIPATOR Safe in the Steep Cliffs by Lenny Raney

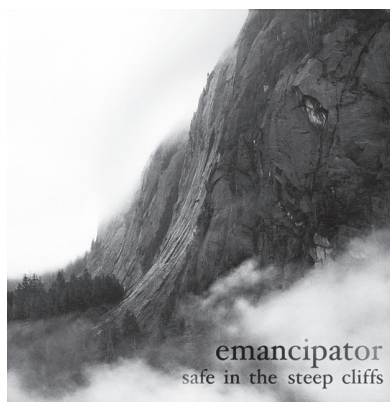
In the 21st century, the DIY subculture added an entirely new dimension. No longer was bedroom recording solely the providence of acoustic guitar wielding self-fancied troubadours who could scrape

together the funds to salvage a used 4-track from an electronics shop ('Sup, Bobby, Loving Beam in the Eye Syndrome). The advent

of widely available sequencing, sampling, and editing audio software meant that an aspiring electronic musician no longer needed an arsenal of Moogs, Korgs, and Rolands in order to produce professional sounding music. These programs have allowed everyone with a little bit of time and a little bit of creativity to create everything from Dirty South rapstrumentals to glitchcore IDM, with undoubtedly mixed results. On the one hand you have Danger Mouse, the less vocal half of Gnarls Barkley, and DangerDOOM, who produced the seminal *Grey Album* entirely in Acid Pro. On the other hand, you have Soulja Boy, who credits his initiation of the nationwide proclivity towards Supermanning hos three years ago to late nights toying around

with a pirated copy of Fruity Loops.

Enter Emancipator, the pseudonym of 22-year-old Portlander Doug Appling. He has done what so few "laptop musicians" have done before him: create a perfect and indistinguishable marriage of electronic and live instrumentation. On his MySpace he has pictures of his makeshift studio, which includes several computers, a MIDI controller, a violin, a bass, an acoustic guitar, a mandolin, an electric guitar, and several effects pedals. The aesthetic on his sophomore effort, *Safe in the Steep Cliffs*, is truly genre-bending and reflective of his kitchen sink recording philosophy, at times evoking electronic influences as disparate as Massive Attack, Thievery Corporation, and Boards of Canada. "Trip-hop," "downtempo," "electronica:" they all fit as descriptors, but only if used in tandem. If I were to use one word to describe his

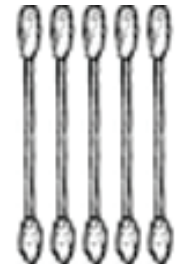


sound, it would be organic. The basslines are just as often cello or double bass as they are digital. Guitar feedback and synth pads work side-by-side in creating atmosphere.

On "Ares," he actually invokes the Bourne movies soundtrack more than any electronic genre. High timbre mallet percussion and strings combine to invoke cinematic tension, while drums vary from inquietude to glitchy blissful cacophony. When listening to this album, it's easy to understand that there might be a tendency in the more technically inclined of us to deconstruct the songs. Is the drumming real or programmed? What pedals did he use to create the sitar sound? However, the music is so breathtaking that it's actually much easier to become completely engrossed in the listening experience. There are no real highlights here, just 60 minutes of equally impressive, equally pulchritudinous music.

songs blend together beautifully to make *Teen Dream* easily digestible in one sitting and prove easy on the ears from start to finish. But that's not to say that this is background music or something to drift off to. "Walk in the Park," possibly

This album belongs alongside Four Tet's *Rounds* and Amon Tobin's *Supermodified* as one of the landmark efforts of the electronic DIY movement.



BEACH HOUSE Teen Dream by Bryant Kitching

Since their debut album in 2006, Beach House have carved out a relatively strong niche in the "chill out" department of the indie rock world. Their self-titled debut, as well as 2008's *Devotion*, although beautiful in their dream-like serenity, were difficult to listen to and enjoy if the listener was not in a certain frame of mind. Personally, even though I loved both previous releases by the Baltimore duo, I rarely found myself searching for either on my iTunes. This can hardly be said about their latest effort, *Teen Dream*. This record is perfect to be played in cars, headphones, parties, loudly or softly, and is quite simply the first great record of 2010.

If *Teen Dream* had been released last year, it would have been overshadowed by the likes of *Veckatimest*, *Merriwether Post Pavilion*, or *Bitte Orca*. But with the clean slate that is 2010, we can take in every glorious noise from Victoria Legrand and Alex Scally. Not only is *Teen Dream* great because it stays true to the band's core sound, which will leave old Beach House fans satisfied, but the album's 10 songs also manage to instantly attract, and sound even better on repeat listens. You'd be hard pressed to find words like "catchy" in reviews for any other Beach House material, yet I found myself humming tracks like the album opener, "Zebra," or single, "Norway," throughout the course of my day on a regular basis.

Not all the tracks are entirely brand new though; the slow yet bouncy "Used To Be" was released as a single in 2008, and its style shows more of a *Devotion* influence. The



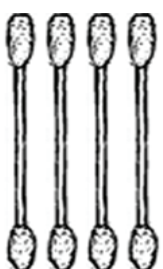
songs blend together beautifully to make *Teen Dream* easily digestible in one sitting and prove easy on the ears from start to finish. But that's not to say that this is background music or something to drift off to. "Walk in the Park," possibly

the album's best track, grabs the listener with its catchy chorus and uncharacteristic rises and falls. Yet the song shows a more melancholy side as well, as Legrand sings about a lost lover: "The face that you see in the door isn't standing there anymore." The common theme of heartache and love lost coupled with the trance-like beauty of Legrand's voice create a striking formula throughout *Teen Dream*.

The album hits its low point after "Used To Be" with two mediocre tracks in a row, "Lover of Mine" and "Better Times," but comes back with flying colors on the surprisingly explosive, *Veckatimest*-like "10 Mile Stereo." Much of *Teen Dream* sounds heavily influenced by the folks of Grizzly Bear at their most ambitious. This is to be expected, though, considering the two bands' paths have been crossing quite frequently lately. Legrand lent her voice to a couple tracks on *Veckatimest*, as well as a track for the *Twilight: New Moon* soundtrack.

Enough cannot be said about Victoria Legrand's voice. It soars out of its shell on the vocal showcase, "Real Love." The standout track is just Legrand and a piano, and her voice has never sounded more poignant or mournful. It's not hard to visualize her in an old, smoky jazz club some decades ago. Legrand has one of, if not the best, voice in indie rock, or at least the most soulful. Her smoky croon adds an element of soul and sophistication that comes to fruition on *Teen Dream*.

Teen Dream is a promising development in this Baltimore band's career, and it will most definitely send a flock of new fans their way. It also could very well catapult them into a new stratum of indie stardom similar to what happened to bands like Animal Collective and Dirty Projectors last year. Some may write *Teen Dream* off as a *Veckatimest* rip-off with female vocals. But in truth, though the album does owe quite a debt to The Inflatables' top album of 2009, it's better for it. Beach House may not be shattering any windows in terms of innovation and creativity, but they are certainly exploring exciting new sounds and building off a template that has potential to make music fans very happy in years to come.



YOUNG MONEY
We Are Young Money
by Nick Murray

I can't look at the *We Are Young Money* album cover and not see The Power Rangers. At first this was a half-clever observation, but now I've come to see this whole mediocre album in this light. If, as Method Man suggested, Wu-Tang formed like Voltron, and GZA just happened to be the head, then Lil Wayne is Young Money's Zordon, the "powerful wizard and mentor to the Power Rangers franchise," to quote Wikipedia. He assembled this group, and now his detached, diminished head floats above them.

Of course, Wayne's presence on his new label's debut record is more than figurative; he appears on fourteen of its fifteen tracks. Unfortunately, his verses on those tracks are among the weakest of his career. While many of the Young Money rappers have picked up various elements of Wayne's style—most notably the frequent references to pro sports and the stark descriptions of sexual acts and desires—he seems to have acquired from them the belief that wordplay as flat as "I keep her running back and forth ...soccer team," is clever.



He raps the above line on the album's second single, "Bedrock," which manages to be enjoyable in spite of its poor lyricism, and oddly eliminates the phrase "like a,"

as if the punchline needed further emphasis. Forget about the Lil Wayne of Tha Carter series or the Dedication mixtapes. These raps leave the listener pining even for the Wayne who adequately wheezed over 2009's biggest beats on October's *No Ceilings*.

Even if *We Are Young Money* were to function as Wayne's mangled attempt to promote his new label, its arrangement leaves much to be desired. Mack Maine leads the rest of his labelmates by appearing on ten songs, yet his uninspired lyrics are only matched by his bland delivery (on "New Shit" he chiasmatically concludes his verse, "Bitch, I'm Mack Maine/ I'm Mack Maine, bitch"). On the other hand, Young Money has a potential star in Nicki Minaj, the rare hyper-sexual female rapper talented enough to make a lasting impression beyond the obligatory Lil Kim comparisons. And while songs like "Every Girl," "Ms. Parker," and "Wife

Beater" seem like the perfect opportunities for her to return to the smut potlatch, Nicki doesn't surface until her thirty-second opening verse on "Fuck da Bulls," the album's eighth song. At this point, her presence feels like a pleasant afterthought, though it's also a much-needed breath of fresh air. Even if her lyrics don't match those of her more recent mixtape, *Beam Me Up, Scotty* ("I just be comin' off the top... asbestos," she says on "Bedrock," making one wonder why these rappers are using their worst lines on the album's most fun and charming beat), she brings enough charisma to buoy entire songs.

Admittedly, print can never do justice to a hook as poetically unpoetic as "I wish I could fuck every girl in the world," and the lines I've selected haven't been particularly flattering. Most of *We Are Young Money* isn't bad, per sé, but it isn't good either. Like the lyrics, the beats are adequate, but ultimately too thin to deserve multiple listens. Ultimately, there's too much good music, much of it including rappers featured on this album, to spend too much time listening to work as uninspired as this.



SCOUT NIBLETT
The Calcination of Scott Niblet
by Bobby Cardos

To reduce Scout Niblett for someone who hasn't heard the English songwriter, it would be appropriate to say "she's like Cat Power when Cat Power still had balls—and even that's somewhat of an understatement." This ignores the multiplicity of her songwriting, as reductions do, but the positioning is apt: minimal compositions with powerful vocals and occasional use of percussion.



Calcination of Scout Niblett proves to be an odd leap from 2007's *This Fool Can Die Now*, an album that featured a lot of Will Oldham and sounded like much of Oldham's collaborations do: pretty, swelling compositions with arrangements that imply a large and talented friend base. To contrast, *Calcination* sounds much more like Niblett ostracized herself from that community, turned up the distortion on her guitar and told Steve Albini to hit record and maybe a few drums every now and then. This was an aesthetic that presented itself on many of

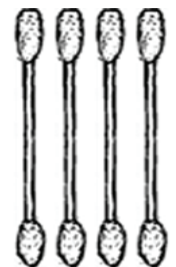
her albums, but in *Calcination* it is the driving force.

The album opens with "Just Do It," a song that starts with a plodding, fat guitar that turns around on a squealing high note. When the guitar lets back for the verse, her vocals come in quiet and sinister. "Calcination" doesn't let up, opening with the line "Welcome to my self made sweatbox," fluctuating from light strums to distorted accents, coming to full fruition around minimal but intimidating drums.

There are times when I walk into a house and *know* it is completely empty, *feel* it is completely empty. Much like that, you listen to *Calcination* with the sense that she is in a completely empty house, and it's a fucking big house, and it's not a place she wants to be by herself. So she turns her guitar way up to try and drown the feeling. Or she hits drums, as on "Lucy Lucifer," pausing occasionally as if to summon the song's namesake. Indeed, many of *Calcination's* lyrics focus on the excising of monsters and demons, both real and within her. The charm of this album is largely the dis-ease it creates and functions on, and its triumph is Niblett's aggressive

presentation, a reminder to everyone that courage is not the absence of fear. The album reaches its catharsis with "Strip Me Pluto," a three minute, reverb-heavy shout, beginning "So, we meet again." Her journey is synopsised in the final track, "Meet and Greet," a nine-minute trip from more atmospheric noodling, culminating in unaccompanied shredding in its final minutes.

It is reassuring to me that Niblett does not run, evidenced by the album's tempo, rarely much faster than plodding. This will be a bother for some, who will think the album drags on too long, the songs often on the longer side for their simple structures. But when the mood is right, I'm more than willing to creep around corridors with this album, daring my demons even as I pray they don't call me on my bluff.



DIY downloads from DIY bands
(free & legal punk/folk-punk albums)

Erin Tobey: Booyah Grandma Demo

<http://www.ifyoumakeit.com/album/erin-tobey/booyah-grandma-demo/>

Erin Tobey is a quiet-voiced musician from Bloomington, IN, who has released one solo record on Plan-It-X Records. When she's not posting artwork on her website or publishing her zine *Here It Is*, she's recording earnest acoustic songs, four of which you can download for free on her *Booyah Grandma Demo*. The innocently melodic "Follow the Trail," is especially charming, and moves into a catchy blues piece, "Secret Letters." If *Juno* hadn't ruined bands like The Moldy Peaches for me, I would compare her to a tamer and sweeter Kimya Dawson.

Defiance, Ohio: discography, through Creative Commons

<http://defianceohio.terrorware.com/audio.php>

Their band name itself sounds like the music Defiance, Ohio delivers: defiant and punk, but also midwestern-style folk. Of these available albums, I especially recommend *The Fear, the Fear, the Fear* and *The Great Depression*, which both romp onwards with guitar, cello, violin, double bass, and raspy lyrics. The *Ghost Mice/Defiance Ohio* split is especially high-energy, with the catchy and ironic antiwar testament "Tanks! Tanks! Tanks!" For frenetic but functional folk-punk, here's your band.

Halo Fauna: Senescence

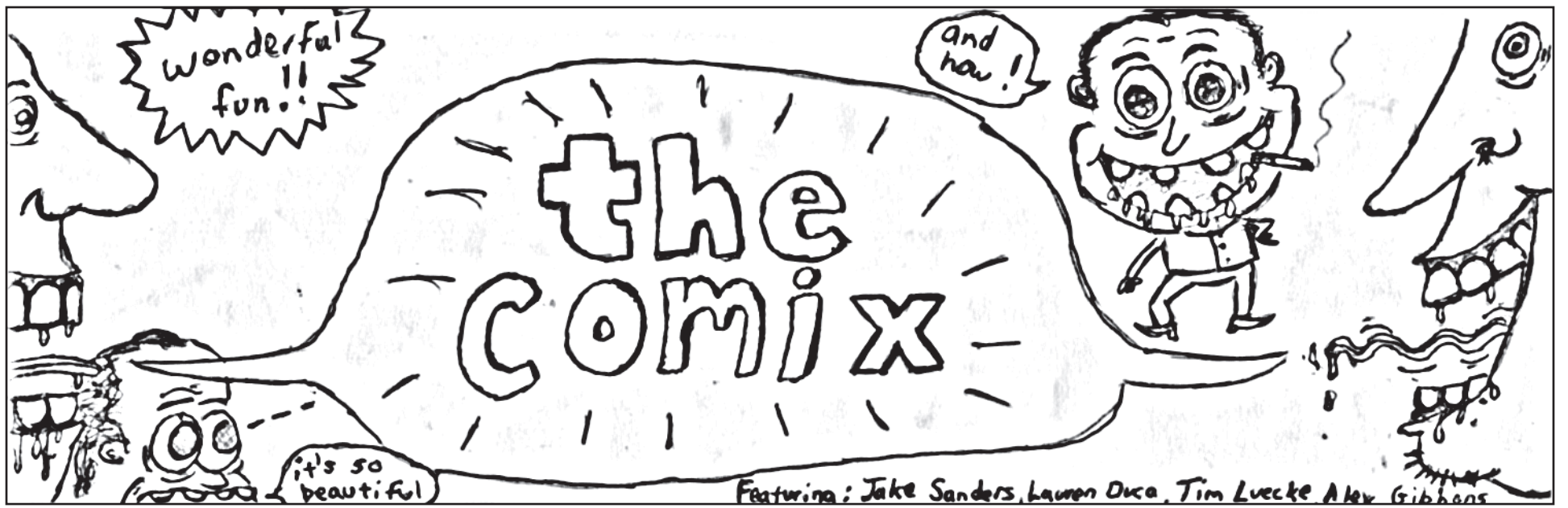
<http://www.ifyoumakeit.com/album/halo-fauna/senescence/>

"Ballpoint" opens Halo Fauna's short-but-sweet *Senescence* with lo-fi songs that take the acerbity out of punk bands of its kind. Creative tempo changes and harmonized choruses reminiscent of an edgy Sesame Street flow throughout the album, until songs like "New Paltz Summer" that soften their sound. With rich bass lines, biting guitar riffs, and laconic lyrics, *Senescence* raises and lowers your heartrate in the best way possible.

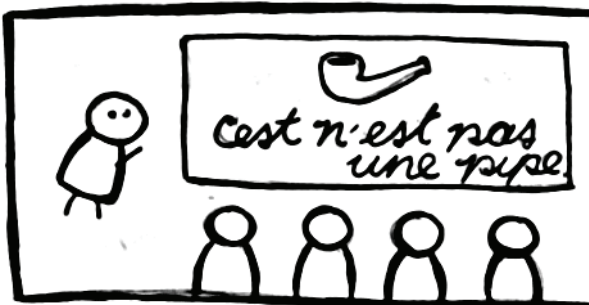
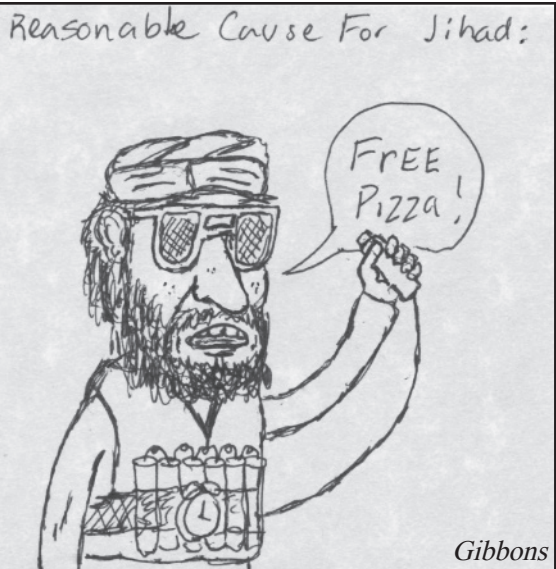
The State Lottery: Cities We're Not From

<http://www.ifyoumakeit.com/album/the-state-lottery/cities-we-re-not-from-2/>

Like Jawbreaker with a more digestible voice and a little more Americana, The State Lottery brings an accessible intensity to this eight song LP released on Salinas Records. The title track makes you want to play air guitar or do push ups, and then fades into more of the heartland-conscious ethos with the following "Two Way Street." The album packs powerful punches without losing musical sincerity or dulling its raw edge.



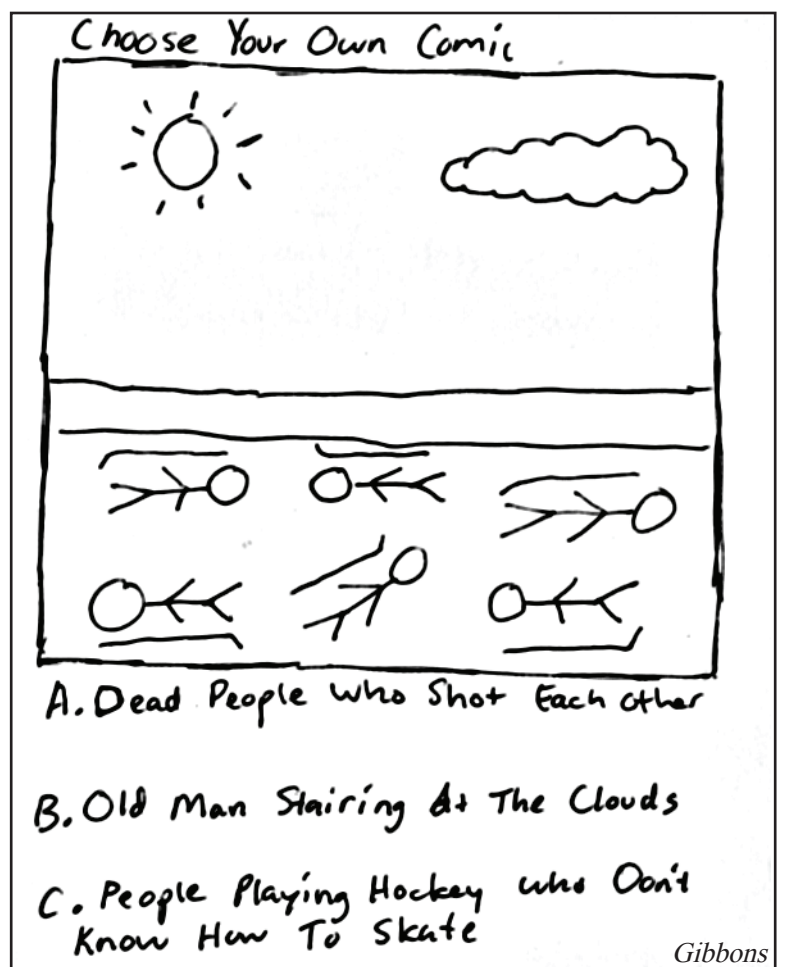
Jake Sanders: Phil Spector and the Wall of Sound



Tim Luecke: Soup Kitten



Lauren Duca: Ceci N'est pas une Comique



Want to submit to the paper's new comix session? Apparently we'll take anything! But seriously, we wanna see your stuff. To submit: Get yer ass to a meeting, every Tuesday @ 8:00pm in the Ramskellar or, email us at paper.fordham@gmail.com.