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UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

Human rights is subject of lecture

BY WILL MELTON
Staff Writer

When a massive human rights violation occurs, whom does the world call upon to deal with the problem? Jamie Metzl, adjunct professor of law at UM-Kansas City, said there is no simple answer. Metzl visited UM-St. Louis on Tuesday to address this question. His lecture, entitled "From Cambodia to Kosovo and Iraq: How Can We Enforce Human Rights Law?" explored the complexities surrounding this subject.



Jamie Metzl

Former human rights officer for the U.N. in Cambodia. Currently adjunct professor of law at UM-Kansas City Foreign Relations Committee, serving as the former senior adviser for information technology at the U.S. Department of State and a Harvard law degree.

After posing the question laid out in the title of his discussion, Metzl gave the audience four key elements to frame the issue: law, norms and morals, institutions of response and politics.

It is important that the international community come to common standards of achievement and creates a foundation for those goals in law. Despite varying norms and morals, "all people intuitively understand what human rights means," Metzl said.

Education becomes a critical factor because, according to Metzl, the world has to work toward changing consciousness; it has to find a way to create human rights consciousness.

In agreement with Metzl is Aaron Gillmann, Student Government representative for the Model United Nations. He says people need to be aware of the problem areas in the world in order to take action.

"After that, people can proactively work for change or can do something as simple as boycotting products from repeat human rights abuses," Gillman said. "Nothing can be done unless students know what abuses are being committed throughout the world."

However, Metzl says that awareness in the form of information is not enough. Originally, he blamed a lack of response to a lack of information. Then, after he worked in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia began to break up and we began to see problems, particularly the war in Bosnia. Only this time, the world had the information. The U.N. was on the ground; yet, the world initially did nothing.

From the first two ideas, Metzl moved into looking at the institutions that the world has to respond to these situations.

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'Back to the Future' a success

Sold-out crowd at homecoming dance caps off week of event; Suen, Mayer take crowns

BY KATE DROLET
Features Editor

On Friday, Feb. 27, a 600-plus crowd gathered in the Westport Sheraton's Chateau on the Lake for UM-St. Louis' 2004 Homecoming dance.

Students had the option of choosing a chicken, beef or vegetarian entree for dinner. The doors opened at 6 p.m. with a cash bar, and dinner was served at 7:30 p.m.

"My roast beef was excellent," said Rachel Aughney, senior, pre-optometry. "The entire dance was really great. I was glad to see that so many people attended."

Dinner was followed by a welcome presented by the Homecoming committee chairs, Martha DeBuhr, Emily Fishman, Beth Grindstaff and Harrison Smith. The president of the alumni association, Jackie McBrady, delivered a short speech about



Kevin Ottley/The Current

Dancers fill the floor of the Westport Sheraton's Chateau on the Lake on Friday night, during the annual homecoming dance.

joining the association and sharing in school spirit.

DeBuhr, who gave a recap of the Homecoming week activities, followed McBrady. Activities

included penny wars, powder puff football, a blood drive, banner wars, a spirit competition and the Big Man on Campus competition. The winner of BMOC was announced at

Wednesday's bonfire. Alex Kerford, sponsored by the Residence Hall Association, won the competition.

After students finished enjoying strawberry cheesecake and coffee, the Homecoming court was introduced. King candidates included Justin Kimble, James Craig Leonard, Kevin Ottley and Benny Suen. Queen candidates were Tyler "Siren" Cross, Silvia Nijhoff, Jan Mayer, Stacia Hallin, Shanna Stotler and Nichole Pagels.

Jonas Zakour, last year's king, crowned Suen as king. Candace Williams, the reigning queen, crowned Mayer as the 2004 Homecoming queen.

Each candidate spent the previous ten days talking to students, hanging up flyers and campaigning for votes. Voting ran from Monday, Feb. 23 until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 26.

The crowning was followed by a night of heating up the dance floor. The dance was DJed by TKO DJ.

see HOMECOMING, page 3

Move over Soulard: Fat Tuesday at UMSL



Mike Sherwin/The Current

Jonas Zakour holds his beads high, atop one of the more than 20 floats that took part in the UM-St. Louis Mardi Gras parade on Tuesday. The parade, organized by Gloria Schultz, wound down Natural Bridge Rd. from South Campus to the front of the MSC, where a crowd of bead-hungry students and parade judges waited.

Call for blood donations answered by UM-St. Louisans

BY AMANDA JENNINGS
Staff Writer

On Monday and Tuesday, the American Red Cross held a blood drive on campus. With a national blood shortage, the gift of blood was even more needed.

Sigma Pi fraternity sponsored the blood drive at the Millennium Student Center. While the turnout was greater than expected in the MSC, the turnout at University Meadows was low. In all, 112 students donated blood. The Red Cross was hoping for at least 60, so they well surpassed their goal.

There is currently a great need for blood donors.

"We have a severe shortage, especially of O negative, but we need all blood types right now," Kathy Castulik, student health educator for University Health Services, said.

A good reason for contributing blood is that you never know when you or a family member may be in need of it.

"We all hope that there is blood there when we need it, and there is only one way to get it," Karen Parrish, Red Cross nurse, said. "The people who give are generous people; they don't get paid for it, and you just have to feel good about helping other

people."

The Red Cross in the area is one of the largest in the nation. Due to this, they often provide assistance to the less fortunate regions.

"The Missouri-Illinois area Red Cross is about the third largest Red Cross in the nation," Parrish said. "There are a lot of smaller areas that cannot meet their demand for blood, so we have to help them out."

In order to motivate students to donate blood, the Red Cross was offering a trophy to the student organization with the most donors. Sigma Pi was the winning organization. Everyone who donated received a free T-shirt and food.

Many students do not donate because they are unsure of the process and hesitant if they are eligible. Parrish said that the process takes about 45 minutes to an hour, depending on the wait.

"Students will be prescreened, and they fill out an application. They will have their blood drawn to make sure there is enough iron," Castulik said.

If you are planning to go to give blood at the next blood drive, make sure you eat something before going.

"We recommend that donors eat something high in iron. Raisins are a prime example," Castulik said. "We also recommend that donors not



Casey Ulrich/The Current

drink tea at least two days before donating because tea depletes iron."

You can donate blood once every 56 days. Castulik said that the reason for the break is so the body has time to build up more blood.

There are many things that can keep students from being eligible to donate. If students have acquired a

tattoo within the last year, they are ineligible to donate.

"If you have lived in the United Kingdom for any longer than three months in accumulation or six months in accumulation in Western Europe since 1980," Parrish said. "That is due to Mad Cow disease."

The Red Cross is always in need

MSA lecture examines the role of women in Islam

BY AMANDA JENNINGS
Staff Writer

On Thursday at 3 p.m. in the Millennium Student Center, the Muslim Student Association hosted "Women in Islam," a lecture and question-and-answer period, which presented the realities of the life and role of women in the Islamic religion.

Maysa Albarcha was the guest lecturer. She went over many aspects of Islamic women's lives, including wearing hijabs, marrying and verses in the Quran.



Maysa Albarcha

Featured speaker at lecture held by Muslim Students Assoc.

Albarcha started the lecture by talking about Islam in opposition to culture. She said that many of the images we see in America are influenced by culture and are not influential of the true religion of Islam.

"We do not refer to Islam as what Muslims do; we have to refer to what Islam teaches," Albarcha said. "It is similar to saying everything Christians do is what Christianity is."

Albarcha also said that the wearing of the hijab is a personal choice. A hijab is a traditional head covering worn by many Muslim women. She said that it is worn to cover a woman's sexuality, not her femininity.

Many people have heard about the law in some Islamic countries, saying that a woman's testimony is only worth half of a man's. Albarcha said that the Quran had verses to show that at times, a woman's testimony is worth more than a man's.

The only time when two women are needed is if a man cannot be found to testify about financial matters. This is due mainly to the fact that at the time the Quran was written, women did not deal much with financial matters.

Albarcha also said that the Quran has many scriptures about the equality of men and women.

"Many of the laws in Islamic countries that are not Islamic are left from Western occupation," Albarcha said.

see WOMEN IN ISLAM, page 3

Chris Conway, junior, biotechnology, donates blood for the American Red Cross on Monday in the Century Rooms of the Millennium Student Center. Conway is a member of the Sigma Pi fraternity which sponsored the blood drive.

of donors, so people can give at a Red Cross location if there is not a campus blood drive when you are able to give. If you have questions about where you can give or if you are eligible, contact the Red Cross at 1-800-GIVELIFE or stop by the student health center to receive information.

Bullet In Board

Put it on the Board:
The Current Events Bulletin Board is a service provided free of charge to all student organizations, University departments and divisions. Deadline for submissions to The Current Events Bulletin Board is 5 p.m., every Thursday before publication. Space consideration is given to student organizations and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. We suggest all postings be submitted at least one week prior to the event. Send submissions via mail at 388 MSC, Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63121, fax at 516-6811 or email at current@jinx.umsl.edu
All listings use 516 prefixes unless otherwise indicated.

Thru March Woodcock Museum

"Image and Imagination: Art of the American West" virtual exhibit is open online at <http://woodcockmuseum.umsl.edu>. Featured are paintings and sculptures from the permanent collections of the Woodcock Museum and the Mercantile Library at UM-St. Louis.

Winter months Free refreshments

Counseling services is serving free hot drinks and cookies at the Compass resource room in Seton Hall during the winter months. Coffee, tea, hot cider and hot chocolate will be available along with four different types of cookies. The drinks and cookies are served between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays. Students, faculty and staff are all welcome to drop by. The Compass is located on the ground floor of Seton Hall, in the lounge with the pool tables.

Through May MyGateway help

Information Technology Services will be holding workshops on MyGateway. They are free and open to faculty, staff and graduate teaching assistants. For more information, call 6538 or e-mail rok@umsl.edu.

To March 12 IC Labs Short Courses

Instructional Computing Labs will be holding Short Courses over the next few weeks. These are free courses offered to any UMSL student, staff or faculty on the following topics: MSWord Basics, Msexcel Basics, MS PowerPoint Basics, UNIX/Mac Basics, C Writing/FTP/HTML/Studentmail/Samba. For a schedule or for more information, please visit www.umsl.edu/technology/instructionalcomputing/labs/shortcourses.html or call 6061.

Annual contests
UM-St. Louis students can participate in United Nations Day: World Holiday contests. The Center for International Studies is sponsoring three contests for student artwork, essays and web sites. A \$2,000 prize will be awarded to the first-place winner in each category. For more information, call 5753 or e-mail gorrellj@umsl.edu. Works are due in the Center for Int'l Studies, SSB 366, by Monday, March 29.

Mon 1 "Poetry of Foreign Language"

Six faculty members from the Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures will discuss "The Poetry of Foreign Language" at 12:15 p.m. in 229 J.C. Penney Center. Nat'l Foreign Language Week is March 1-5. Bring a lunch. Light refreshments will be served. Call 5699 or visit <http://www.umsl.edu/~cfh> for more information.

Tues 2 French film at 210

The French film "Le Bossu" will screen at 4 p.m. at Gallery 210's auditorium in the Telecommunity Center. Admission is \$1 and free parking is available on Lot E. Call 6546 for more information.

Thurs 4 2004 Teleconference Series

"Promoting the Public Good: Fulfilling Higher Education's Civic Mission" will take place in 100 Clark Hall from noon to 3 p.m. This conference explores the moral, social, and political aspects of these concepts. The panel will discuss the importance of civic engagement in today's society, sharing successful programs, and provide guidance in creating campus and community partnerships. Bring a lunch. Everyone is welcome. Call 4508 for more information.

4 Carrie Mae Weems opens at Gallery 210

"May Days Long Forgotten," an exhibit of photographs and a short video by African-American photographer Carrie Mae Weems, will be on display today through April 3 in Gallery 210. The opening reception will take place today from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Weems will attend. The event is free and open to the public. Call 5976 or visit <http://www.umsl.edu/~gallery> for more information.

Thurs 4 (cont.) "UMSL Women on the Move" opens at VISIO

"UMSL Women on the Move: A Retrospective of UMSL Women Artists," an exhibit featuring works by female faculty and alumni, opens today and runs through March 25 at Gallery VISIO, 190 MSC. The exhibition is free and open to the public. The opening reception is today from 4-6 p.m. Call 7922 for more information.

4 Nurses discuss women's wellness

Susan Kendig and Deborah Kiel, both clinical assistant professors of nursing at UMSL, will discuss "The Great Hormone Debate: What's new from contraception to hormone therapy" and "Your Mind, Your Health: Emotional wellness throughout the lifespan" at noon in 211 Clark Hall. The event is free and open to the public. Call 5581 for more information.

Sat 6 The Write Stuff: Freelancing

Aspiring writers are invited to participate in the noncredit course "The Write Stuff: Freelancing." The course will be held from 1-4 p.m. in 78 J.C. Penney Center. Participants will learn what it takes to make it as a freelance writer. The fee is \$29 and the course is open to the public. Call 6793 or visit <http://www.umsl.edu/~contas> for more information.

Sat 6 (cont.) UMSL Team Trivia Night

The UMSL Staff Association, Office of Student Life and Rec Sports will hold UMSL Team Trivia Night from 7-11 p.m. at St. Ann of Normandy Catholic Church, 7530 Natural Bridge Rd. in Normandy, Mo. The cost is \$12/person in advance, \$15 at the door. Teams and individuals welcome to sign up. Players must register by March 3 with a maximum of 8 players per team. The event is open to the public. Call 5090 for more info.

Sun 7 Open house for prospective students

Prospective students can learn about campus life and services on UMSL Day. It will take place from 1:30-5 p.m. in the Century Rooms in the MSC. It will feature representatives from the Office of Admissions, Office of Career Services, Office of Student Life, Office of Student Financial Aid and Center for Academic Development. Visit <http://www.umsl.edu/admission> for more information.

7 French Film Festival at Gallery 210

"Les Glaneurs et la Glaneuse" will screen at 1 p.m. in the auditorium at Gallery 210 in the TeleCommunity Center. At-the-door admission is \$1. Free parking available on Lot E off East Drive. Call 6546 for more information.

Put it on the Board! Call 516-5174 for details or email current@jinx.umsl.edu

The Campus Crimeline

The following criminal incidents were reported to the University of Missouri - St. Louis Police Department during the winter between January 31, 2004 and February 8, 2004. If readers have information that could assist the police investigation, they are urged to call 516-5155. Campus police as a public service to promote awareness provides this information. Remember-crime prevention is a community effort.

February 16 - Stolen Auto - Mark Twain Dr.
A student parked his car in Parking Lot M at the Mark Twain Gym around 12:30 p.m. and when returned at 1:15 p.m. he noticed that his car was gone. He stated that he apparently left his keys in the ignition and his car doors unlocked.

February 17 - Harassment- Millennium Student Center
A student reported three male subjects were harassing him because he was talking to a female.

February 5 - Stealing under \$500 -Unknown location

A male student reported that some time between February 9 and February 18, some unknown person(s) had cut the tabs from both of his license plates. He is unsure of where this occurred because he has been all over the St. Louis area.

NOTE: Items will be stolen from your backpack, purse, wallet etc. if it is left unattended! Even if it is only for a minute or two. Please help prevent crime by always keeping your possessions with you at all times. It is also noted that just because a classroom, office, lounge, library, computer lab, lunch area etc. is occupied by many people doesn't mean your property is safeguarded.

!!WANTED!!

A FEW GOOD MEN...AND WOMEN TO WRITE SPORTS AND NEWS. COME BY THE OFFICE, 388 MSC AND DROP OFF A COVER LETTER AND RESUME. NICHOLE LECLAIR, THE MANAGING EDITOR, WILL CONTACT YOU ABOUT AN INTERVIEW TIME.

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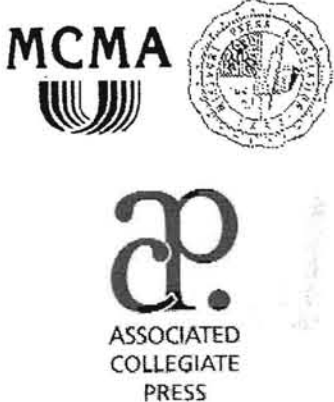
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College Democrats are back on campus, building up membership

BY ANNIINA VUORI
Staff Writer



Casey Ulrich/The Current

Ben DeClue sits for a photograph in the ASUM offices on Thursday. DeClue is president of the College Democrats, a student group which had been inactive, but was revived and again officially recognized as a student group.

The College Democrats were recently recognized as an official organization on campus again. Many people are not aware of the group.

"We have College Democrats?" Brent Willis, senior, English, said when enquired what he thinks of the group.

Ben DeClue, president of the College Democrats, admitted that the group was not particularly active last semester.

Jimmy Lappe, junior, political science, is a member of the group.

"Now we are trying to build something back again and get people involved," Lappe said at the group's meeting on Thursday.

At the moment, the College Democrats have about 10 members who attend meetings. The meetings are at noon on Thursdays on the third floor of the Millennium Student Center.

"Our meetings are regular club meetings, catching up with people and talking about what is going on," DeClue said. "We understand not everybody can come to meetings, but if people are interested in our group, as I know many people are, they can e-mail us in umslcollegedems@yahoo.com."

Presently, the Democrats are seen mainly on campus banners. They also send e-mails to political science professors encouraging them to mention

the group to their students.

"There's not really anywhere we can go without members," DeClue said. "Although next year there could be a lot more people interested because the elections are coming up."

The group also strives to have members involved off campus. They encourage members to participate in the area where they live.

"We also want to encourage people to be active in their own community

outside the campus," Lappe said.

According to DeClue, relations with the College Republicans are good. There have been plans of a voter registration drive with the College Republicans and the Associated Students of the University of Missouri.

"I'm pretty good friends with the leadership; we have classes together," DeClue said.

In the Jan. 26 issue of *The Current*, the editorial board announced its

endorsement of Sen. John Kerry for the next president. DeClue said this was fair because newspapers in general take a stand all the time.

He also said the editorial board had clearly examined the issue closely before making their decision.

"It would have been legitimate to write for Bush being re-voted," DeClue said. "In that case we would have written a response, which is what the College Republicans did about the editorial on Kerry."

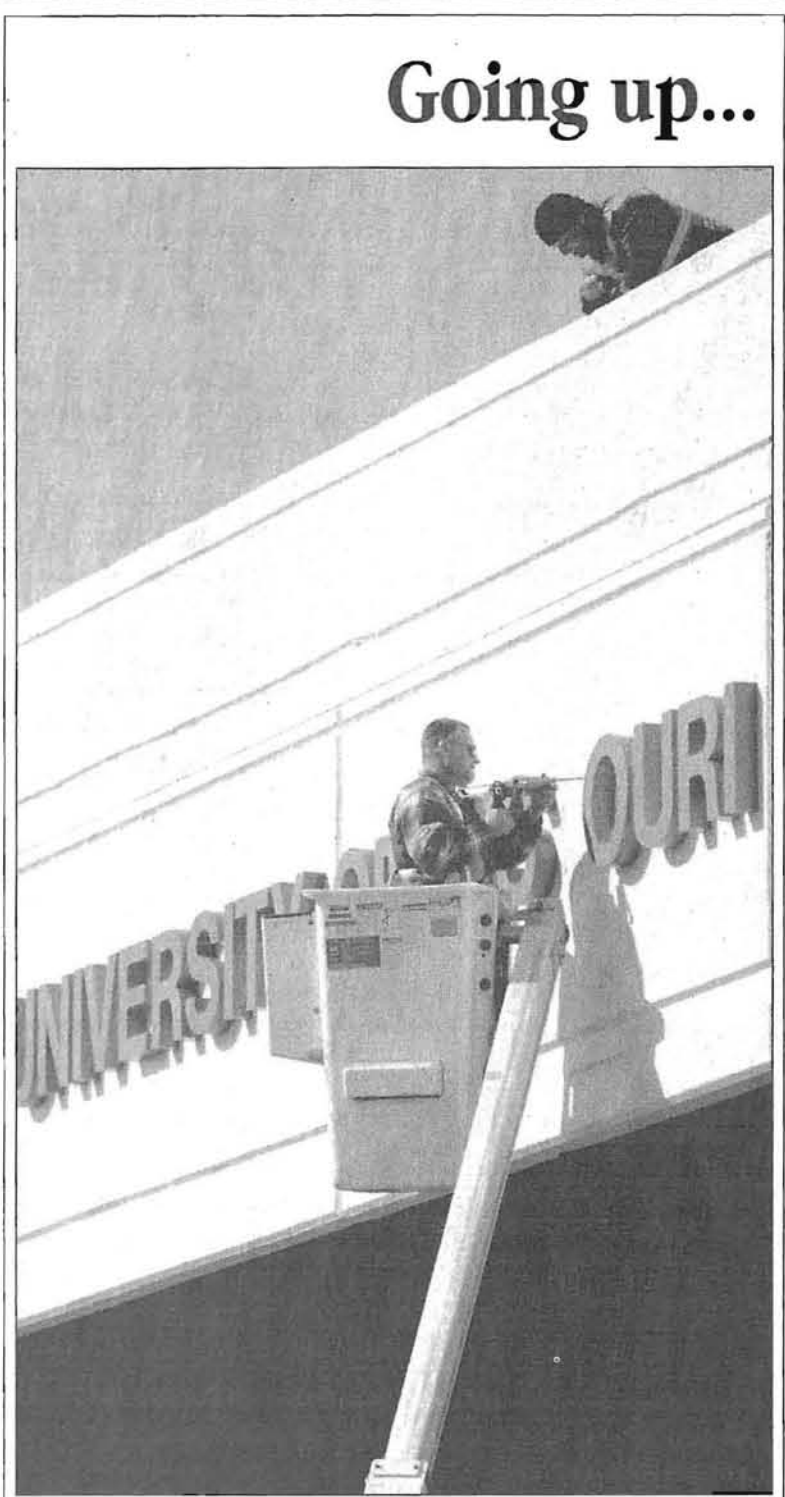
The College Democrats are a very heterogeneous group. As an example, DeClue said that most of the Democratic primary candidates had their own supporters in the group.

"We welcome anyone who is interested and votes Democratic at least on one part of the ballot," DeClue said.

DeClue said, at the moment, the level of involvement in the group is not high enough for charity, but resources given, the College Democrats would be interested in collaborating in a charity project with one of the campus groups working in the field.

One project that the group helped to facilitate was when Democratic primary candidate Al Sharpton visited UM-St. Louis on Jan. 28. *The Current* quoted Sharpton saying that the Democratic Party is dead and he is attempting to resurrect it.

"Al is entitled to think what he wants, but as far as I'm concerned, the party is still very much live and kicking," DeClue said.



Mike Sherwin/The Current

Chuck McKinney, of Fast Signs, works on the installation of new University of Missouri - St. Louis lettering on the I-70 overpass above Florissant Rd. on Thursday afternoon.

Uncertain future for UMSL Riverpup mascot

BY WILL MELTON
Staff Writer

Talk about changing UM-St. Louis's mascot is not a new thing. Student Government Association Vice President Beth Grindstaff says that she has heard students vocalize their dislike for the Rivermen since her freshman year.

Efforts to do away with the current mascot originated with students involved in the athletics program, particularly the cheerleaders. Grindstaff claims that they have expressed complaints about composing a cheer around the cumbersome Rivermen. "Rivermen is not a gender-friendly term," Grindstaff said.

Though no formal resolution or legislation of any sort has been drafted to

deal with this issue, SGA added the topic to the discussion board on the My Gateway website in October 2003.

Many students have contributed their ideas on whether or not the school needs a new mascot. Some students have argued in favor of tradition and keeping the Rivermen as our official mascot. However, most of the students on the discussion board have called for a change.

Suggestions have ranged from the Bulldogs, the Predators, the Mavericks, the Jaguars and the River Hawks. Others have submitted names in jest such as the River Beavers or the Piranhas.

The idea is to select a name that will be unique, inoffensive and capture UM-St. Louis's spirit. Initially, there was some confusion on the message board as to whether or not a new mas-

cot would lead to new colors.

Thomas Ames, sophomore, philosophy, has been an active voice on the message board. He has submitted potential logos as well as mascot names. Ames, a member of the Rivermen Inline Hockey Club, is against the idea of changing the mascot at all. Though, he says, if they do wind up changing it, the best choice would be "either the River Captains, or if they want to go for something stronger, the Predators." The latter, he said, is a "unique name" that you don't see associated with many colleges.

SGA President Kristin Runde informed students via posting that she was happy about all the discussion taking place, while clearing up any confusion students may have had. She also stated that the colors would not be changing.

"This never was and never will be one of our intentions," Runde said. "We are definitely trying to make sure that we choose a mascot that will go along with the school colors. One of things that we are hoping to bring out of changing the mascot is more UMSL spirit, especially at all of the games."

For now the point is to collect more student input. No decision about this issue is going to be made overnight. Discussion will continue and all students should feel free to visit the SGA website on My Gateway and post their own thoughts regarding this matter.

WOMEN IN ISLAM, from page 1

Many students and staff showed up to hear the lecture.

It was a good learning experience outside of the classroom for students.

"There is more to learn in college than what is taught in the classroom," Jeff Griesemer, senior, biology, said.

After Albarcha finished her lecture, she opened the floor up for a question- and-answer session.

A wide range of questions were asked, including her thoughts on France's recently proposed ban on the wearing of hijabs in public schools and how Muslims are portrayed in the media.

The Muslim Student Association is holding another lecture in April, although the date is presently undetermined.

HUMAN RIGHTS, from page 1

There are global and regional organizations, but the state plays an important role in the matter, with regards to their domestic policies. Ultimately, politics is the key factor.

The farther away people get from real politics, the harder it is. No one mechanism itself is going to be sufficient. We need as many tools within arm's reach as possible, to then

muster the political will.

"We who are interested in human rights have to get our hands dirty in some way," Metz said.

The only way to get from here to there is by creating a new consciousness connected to a politically organized movement domestically and internationally.

As Metz said, "there's always a

genocide lurking in the wings." So when the next one comes around, what are we going to do? Unfortunately, there is no clear answer.

The event was co-sponsored by the E. Desmond Lee Global Ethnic Collaborative of the Center for International Studies and The American Jewish Committee.

HOMECOMING, from page 1


"I think Homecoming went awesome. I'm so excited at how great it turned out," Grindstaff said.

The king and queen performed their first official duties by being


introduced at the Homecoming basketball game on Saturday, Feb. 28. For more information about the game, see the Sports section.

The court will attend several

events in the next year, such as St. Louis parades, and will host the fall 2004 new student orientations and Welcome Week festivities, among other activities.




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UMSL Spring Job Fair 2004

Friday, March 12, 2004
9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Mark Twain Building


Admission is free for job seekers who pre-register by March 5, 2004. Non-registered job seekers must pay \$5.00 at the door.

Visit www.umsl.edu/career to pre-register and for the list of employers attending the job fair. Among the 72 companies on the list are:

Anheuser-Busch	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	FBI
CitiFinancial	John Hancock Insurance	Judevine Ctr.
Graybar Electric	Nieman Marcus	Peace Corps
Southwest Bank	Swank Audio-Visual	Verizon Wireless
Sherwin-Williams	U.S. Navy Officers Program	UPS
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OPINIONS

OUR OPINION

Gay marriage: let the states decide

Interracial marriages have only begun to gain acceptance in the last few decades. Prior to the evolution of equal rights, mixed couples were unheard of, anomalies in a polar culture. Furthermore, interracial relationships were considered unnatural and not permitted under Jim Crow laws. Social change has led to the growing acceptance of mixed couples.

The current marriage controversy concerns homosexual couples. The federal government has joined the debate, and President George W. Bush is pushing Congress to ban gay and lesbian marriages. This political action is inconsistent with the civil liberties granted to citizens. After all, what is marriage in the eyes of the law other than a civil union?

Religious leaders may consider homosexuality to be sinful and immoral, but that is their right. The morality of gay and lesbians is not in question here. The rights of two consenting adults are the issue.

Heterosexual married couples enjoy a number of legal rights that

on a case-by-case basis. And despite protests by hospitals to the contrary, it is not an unusual occurrence.

Yes, there are some legal measures available to same-sex couples today, but they are not enough — either in scope or recognition.

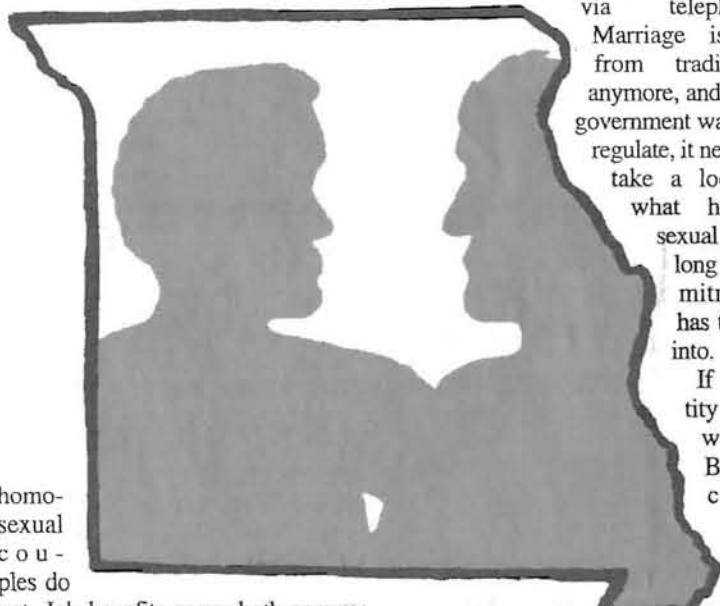
If the President is so concerned with the sanctity of marriage, he should consider the rising rate of divorce in America, along with the "reality shows" that dominate prime time. Divorce is extremely common, and marriage has turned into a short-term, reversible commitment. Reality television reinforces this mind frame. Shows such as "My Big Fat Obnoxious Fiance", "The Bachelor", and "Joe Millionaire" are only a few of the line-ups that make a mockery of marriage.

So now, it is wrong for two women to truly commit their lives to each other in an act of love, but it is acceptable for a man to "test out" a group of women and pick one to marry after knowing her for two months? Two men cannot form a civil union, but America can randomly choose a life partner for a woman by casting votes via telephone? Marriage is far from traditional anymore, and if the government wants to regulate, it needs to take a look at what heterosexual "life-long commitment" has turned into.

If sanctity is what Bush is concerned with, he should turn on prime time. Not only does reality television illustrate the unimportance of true commitment, but many shows feature premarital sex, cheating and promiscuity.

Gay and lesbian couples can adopt children, they can pay the bills together, and they can share many aspects of their lives. So why has it become such a big deal for them to formally commit to each other in the eyes of the law?

The government needs to devote its marital concerns to issues other than homosexual unions. Worry about divorce rates and the desecration of marriage by reality television before stipulating the sexual orientation of marriage. Whether or not homosexuality is wrong is a moral issue that should be left to religious leaders and the individual, not the federal government.



homosexual couples do not. Job benefits cover both spouses. Benefits can include health care, welfare and other monetary profits.

In the event of a married person's death, the surviving spouse receives the inheritance, unless otherwise expressed in a will. If a homosexual couple is not married and one dies, the next of kin are the recipients of the legacy. If the family of the deceased does not know about or recognize the couple, the surviving partner can end up without anything, despite his or her lifelong commitment to the deceased.

In cases where one partner becomes hospitalized, the other may be denied the right to make medical decisions or speak on behalf of his or her partner, even if that partner is incapacitated. In others, they have even been denied visitation rights. When questioned by anti-gay marriage advocates, hospitals may deny that they would do this, but the point is: they are able to choose, not the couple, and the decisions are made

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LETTERS

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Letters to the editor should be brief, and those not exceeding 200 words will be given preference.

We edit letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number. Students must include their student ID numbers.

Faculty and staff must include their title(s) and department(s). Editor-in-chief reserves the right to respond to letters. The Current reserves the right to deny letters.

Under Current

by Kevin Ottley
Staff Photographer

What kind of Homecoming event would you like to see?



Elizabeth Lee
Sophomore
French

Get a couple of Nascar drivers to race around the MSC!



Freddy Cahyadi
Graduate Student
Economics

They should have a jazz concert in the Pilot House.



Gwilyn Lobo
Sophomore
History

We should have like a comedy show or something like that.



Dan Donahue
Sophomore
Political Science

A fight between Ja Rule and 50 Cent! That's what I think.

Slippery slope yourself away

"If we allow gay marriage, what's next, gay families?" "If we don't go after Iraq, then other nations will come after us." "If Jimmy uses marijuana, he'll use crack someday."

Do these phrases sound familiar? Does the wording ring a bell? It should, because it is something called a slippery slope and it is being used more and more as a logical argument these days. The ironic thing is, the slippery slope is probably the least logical argument you can use, but it is not stopping anyone.

What a slippery slope does is basically say that if you do one thing, then inevitably, something else will happen. But the sheer posterousness of that argument should be enough to discount that theory. If a person smokes pot, he or she is not inevitably going to smoke crack. That is a fallacy.

Slippery slopes are being used to debate everything from abortion to drugs to movies to eating habits. Turn on one of the major network news programs (NBC, CBS, FOX, ABC) and you will hear many in just a short half hour. But it is not just the television personalities putting the slippery slope to use. You can hear President George W. Bush use it on a fairly regular basis, and so did former presidential candidate Howard Dean. These arguments are becoming the norm, and no one is

questioning it. It is ridiculous. What makes them ridiculous is that they say that one event must lead to another, as if there are not hundreds, if not thousands, of other variables that can affect the outcome of an event. Slippery slopes are a dangerous form of argument, and they are an easy way

of passing the blame off on "fate." "If Michelle gets an abortion, she is just going to keep having them when she gets pregnant, or she is just going to have tons of unprotected sex." So, because a woman gets an abortion, automatically she becomes a whore? It is not quite that simple.

No, the slippery slope can take you downhill fast. In fact, just think of the term "slippery slope." The very idea of a slippery slope, or hill if you will, conjures images of danger. "Be careful, Joey, that hill (slope) is slippery, it looks dangerous." Indeed, the slippery slope is dangerous. It can lead you to not only dangerous conclusions, but it also can make you look very foolish. While I was at Southeast Missouri State University, I took a logic class, and my professor had a sign on the door of the classroom that said "Leave all slippery slopes at the door." He had a point.

So, in the future, if you are going to make an argument, make it logically, and leave your slippery slopes at the door.



JASON GRANGER
Editor-in-Chief

The issue

President George W. Bush is calling for a constitutional amendment against gay marriage. Meanwhile, Massachusetts has declared them legal and San Francisco is handing out marriage licenses to gay couples.

We suggest

This is the type of thing that should be decided by states. The federal government has no place butting into the private lives of the citizens of the U.S. Bush needs to back off and stay out of people's personal lives.

So what do you think?

Tell us what you think! Drop us a line at the office, 388 MSC, or online at our Web site www.thecurrentonline.com.

Women's rights: Good enough?

Gay rights, immigrant rights, racial prejudice—so much struggle for equality in the news and in our everyday lives. Shouldn't I be thankful for my own privileged status? After all, as a white U.S. citizen in a heterosexual relationship, my rights are secure.

Well, almost. I'm still a woman.

Yes, it's 2004 and that should not be an issue in today's world. We can vote and own property, our employers have written sexual discrimination clauses into their policies, sexual harassment is no longer something we just expect, and there are laws to protect us like never before. The struggle for women's rights closed in victory with our mothers' generation, right?

Not even close. We've merely made enough progress so that overt discrimination is not such a factor in most of our everyday lives. Enough of the laws that openly penalized women have been changed as to render us complacent. And just maybe, considering the plight of women and minorities in other parts of the world as well as minorities here at home, we don't feel justified in complaining. Otherwise, if not for ignorance of its existence, why else would we have let the battle for the Equal Rights Amendment linger for 81 years?

If you are not familiar with the ERA, you may be surprised at its simplicity. For the arguments waged against it, and the time spent trying to pass it, you may expect it to be complex, controversial or at least weighty with "legal-ese." In fact, it is 24 words. It reads:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account

of sex." That's all. This is the statement that our society finds so threatening. Women today may become astronauts, but they must not presume equality with men.

You may wonder why we still need an amendment proposed 81 years ago, if our rights have grown so much in that time. Or, you may think it obsolete. Unfortunately, it is still completely relevant.

The only right that our Constitution specifies for both men and women is the right to vote. All other rights are taken from interpretation, and are therefore vulnerable

each time they are challenged. Although the 14th amendment gives women a thin legal standing to challenge sexual discrimination (since 1971, at least), it still implies that women must prove their equality.

Congressional power allows laws to be replaced by a simple majority. Though it is hard to imagine that our representatives would reverse our progress in women's rights, the truth is, now or in the future, they still have the ability. A Constitutional guarantee would make this much more difficult. Too unlikely for consideration? Reference the opposition in Congress to title IX, the Violence Against Women Act, the Fair Pension Act, the Paycheck Fairness Act, coverage for family planning and contraception (though coverage for Viagra sailed through) and U.S. ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

see WOMEN'S RIGHTS, page 5



NICHOLE LECLAIR
Managing Editor

Mommy and daddy were right: take your vitamins



BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
Science Columnist

observed to increase the activity of some immune cells. Kohtarou Kodama and colleagues from Eisai Co's Tsukuba Research Laboratories found that among infected mice, 95 percent of those treated with B2 survived while only 10 percent of the untreated mice were still alive after one week. A sepsis-causing strain of E. coli had infected the mice.

Researchers cautioned that the study is an early one and there may be very different results for human beings. One of the effects of sepsis is an overreaction of the inflammatory response of the immune system, and the B2 treatment seemed to calm this response by lowering the levels of molecules involved in inflammation.

The vitamin B2 used in the study was highly purified and the treated mice were injected with doses above those used to treat vitamin B2 deficiency. Among the most encouraging results for human treatment was the fact that B2 treatment seemed to rid the body of the infecting organisms at an increased rate. The researchers found the treatment worked for toxin-induced shock and for both gram-negative and gram-positive bacterial infection, even after blood poisoning had begun.

Vitamin B2 is not the only vitamin getting attention for treatment of disease. Vitamin C and other antioxidants have been shown to reduce the stickiness of blood platelets, making them less prone to forming clots, one of the effects of sepsis and a factor in strokes. Antioxidants like vitamin C appear to counteract the oxidation of cholesterol, which increases blood platelet stickiness, therefore making blood less likely to clump into clots and plaque less likely to form on blood vessel walls and narrow them. Studies indicate that diets high in foods with vitamin C seems to lead to fewer strokes but simple dosing with vitamin C supplements has not had the same effect.

Two new studies also investigated the role of vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin, in rheumatoid arthritis and in multiple sclerosis (MS). Both conditions are thought to be autoimmune diseases, in which the body's immune system turns against itself. Like B2, vitamin D may work by calming overactive immune cells.

These long-range studies depended on questionnaires of American women to determine their levels of intake of vitamin D, by diet and sunshine exposure. Although self-reports of diet are less reliable than blood tests, the study seemed to point to great benefits for vitamin D intake at recommended levels. At the recommended daily amount or higher, women were thirty percent less likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis and forty percent less likely to develop multiple sclerosis, when compared to control groups at lower doses. Some of our vitamin D comes from food sources like fatty fish, liver or fortified foods, but most comes from exposure to sunlight. The body makes this steroid hormone in response to sunshine. Exposure to bright sunlight for as little as fifteen minutes a day for three days a week can be enough for a minimum requirement. The vitamin is needed to help the body absorb and retain calcium but can be toxic at higher levels.

Curiously, MS is more common in higher latitudes, where people may get less sun exposure. Rheumatoid arthritis is more common in the elderly, who often have lower levels of vitamin D. The likelihood of the benefit of vitamin D against these two diseases is strengthened by studies in mice with symptoms like MS or rheumatoid arthritis, where the mice showed improvement when treated with vitamin D.

It seems that those vegetable-pushing moms may have been on the right track all these years.

Mom told you vitamins were good for you. Recent studies find that vitamins B2, D and C may all have roles as treatments for disease.

A recent Japanese study, published in Infection and Immunity, tested the therapeutic power of high doses of vitamin B2 in the treatment of blood poisoning or sepsis. "Blood poisoning" sounds like a health threat from another time, but sepsis is a resistant foe against which we have few weapons. Surprisingly, one out of four intensive care patients contract it. In sepsis, an infection overwhelms the body's defenses and releases toxins into the blood. It can lead to blood clotting, multiple organ failure and death. Present treatment is with antibiotics and intense care but the success rate is not good, even without the issue of increasing bacterial resistance to antibiotics. Some researchers consider developing more effective treatments for blood poisoning as a top medical priority.

The Japanese study looked at the effects of high doses of vitamin B2, or riboflavin, in mice with sepsis. The vitamin had previously been

WOMEN'S RIGHTS, from page 4

There remain active opponents to the ERA, but their arguments are much the same as those against woman suffrage. These include: the downfall of the family structure, women in combat, same sex marriage, reproductive and custody rights, a loss of privacy rights and the idea that women and men could be equal under the law. In the history of

which I am aware, all of these issues are alive and well on their own. As for the gay marriage concern, 35 states have currently ratified the ERA, and how many of these have gay marriage? Issues concerning reproductive laws have also been handled outside of the ERA context.

Women's equality is as pertinent now as it was in 1848, at the first

Women's Rights Convention. Our rights, though greater than ever before, are neither complete, nor secure. Will our answer to centuries of toil and progress be that this is "good enough"? I hope not.

For more information on women's rights and the ERA, you might start at: www.equalrightsamendment.org or www.ERAcampaign.net.

The best album that you've never heard

This week: The Beatles: The ten best Oasis songs you haven't heard

BY JASON GRANGER
Editor-in-Chief

Oasis. A band that is often overlooked nowadays by the American listening public. It is to their detriment, however, because Oasis continues to impress me with every release. So, for this week's column, I thought I would follow the theme of last week and look at the ten best Oasis songs that you have never heard. The brothers Gallagher (Liam and Noel) have an impressive body of work, so bear with me.

Like the Beatles, Oasis has a number of songs that are popular ("Wonderwall," "Live Forever," "Don't

across the pond. The lyrics are amazing in this song. "Some might say/They don't believe in Heaven/Go and tell it to the man who lives in Hell." This song was overshadowed by the success of "Wonderwall," "Champagne Supernova" and "Don't Look Back in Anger."

7) "Half the World Away" -The Masterplan

This acoustic ditty is one of Noel Gallagher's finest written songs. The words are affecting and deep, showing maturity in the elder Gallagher's mindset. His confusion at his surroundings and his anger at the world around him

4) "Going Nowhere" -The Masterplan

This song is sung by Noel and it is just a beautiful song. He is great at playing with words and he does so with great ability on this song. "I'm gonna get me a motor car/Maybe a Jaguar/Maybe a plane/Or a day of fame/I'm gonna be a millionaire/So can you take me there/Wanna be wild coz my life's so tame."

3) "Talk Tonight" -The Masterplan

This is one of the finest love songs ever written. It is a simple acoustic ballad with Noel on lead vocals and Liam on backup. It is a plaintive, pleading song about a man who wants to tell his woman how she "saved my life." It is beautifully written and even more beautifully performed.

2) "Where Did It All Go Wrong?" -Standing On Shoulder of Giants

This song takes Noel's formidable talents at writing rockers and ballads and combines them into one. Such a thing is known as a power ballad, and this is one of the great power ballads of the 1990s. "You know that feeling you get/You feel you're older than time/You ain't exactly sure/If you been away awhile/Do you keep the receipts/For the friends that you buy/And ain't it bitter-sweet/You're only just getting by."

1) "The

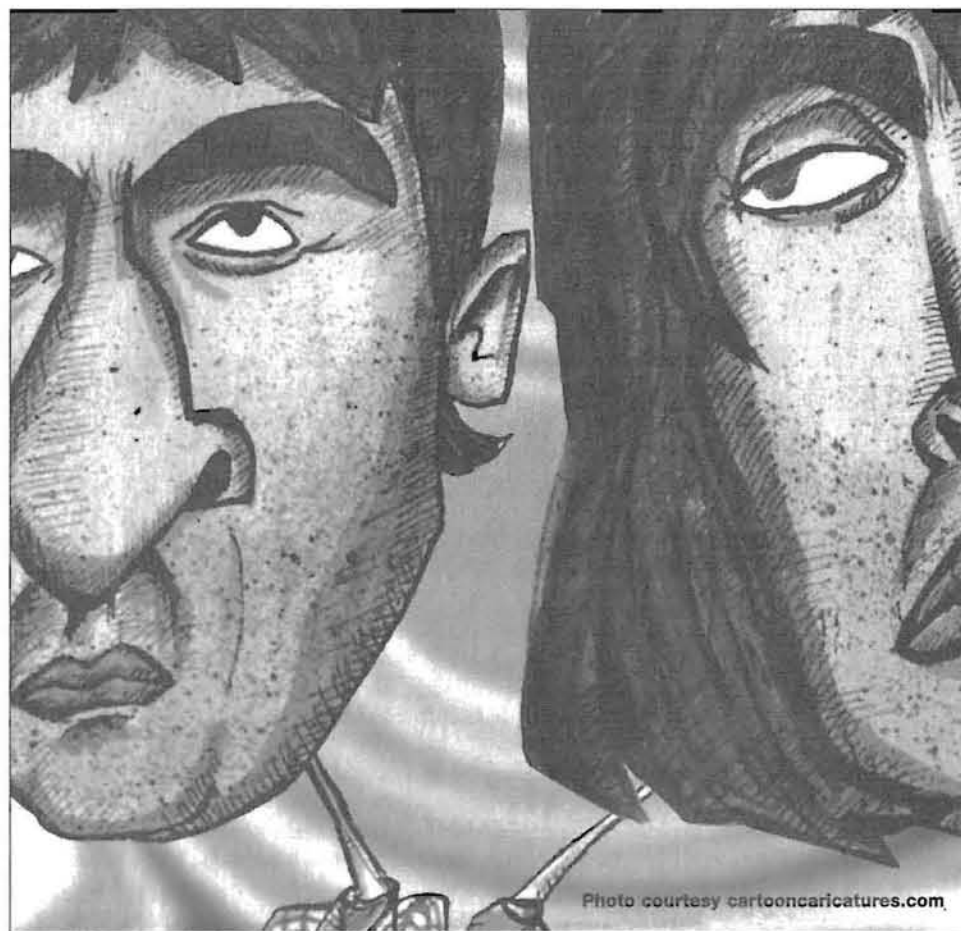


Photo courtesy cartooncaricatures.com

Look Back in Anger," "Don't Go Away," "Champagne Supernova"), but several that many people may never have heard, so let's take a look at them.

10) "Acquiesce" -The Masterplan
This is a song that should have been released as an "A"-side single, but got buried as a "B"-side. It is a loud rocker that has become a live show favorite. As a testament to just how badass Oasis is, they played this song on "Saturday Night Live" instead of a hit.

9) "Sunday Morning Call" -Standing On The Shoulder Of Giants

This is a melancholy and, indeed, depressing song sung by Noel Gallagher, the lead songwriter. Off the brash and arrogant "Giants," this song lends a mellow feel to an album full of loud rockers.

8) "Some Might Say" -What's The Story (Morning Glory?)

A big hit in Great Britain, this song never caught on in the U.S. like it did

are obvious. A great song.

6) "Magic Pie" -Be Here Now

This long stadium rocker has over 50 guitar tracks layered on it. It is one of those songs for which you want to make sure you have your stereo cranked to 11. It is not only loud but also has meaning, a staple of any Noel Gallagher song; they always have hidden meaning. This one wears its message on its sleeve. I'll leave it to you to figure out.

5) "Gas Panic!" -Standing On The Shoulder of Giants

For those of you who do not know, the Gallagher boys used to be cocaine addicts. Then they both got families and decided they needed to quit. The best way to do this, evidently, is to lock oneself in a room with one's brother and quit cold turkey. This song is about the DTs they went through and coming down from a cocaine high. This is powerful stuff.

Masterplan" -The Masterplan

Noel Gallagher has called this his masterpiece. These words are the best of any song not written by a man with the last name Lennon or McCartney. Put simply, this is the pinnacle of songwriting in the 1990s. "Say it loud and sing it proud and they/Will dance if they wanna dance/Please brother take a chance/You know they're gonna go/Which way they wanna go/All we know is that we don't know/Which way it's gonna be/Please brother let it be/Life on the other hand/Won't make you understand/Why we're all part of the masterplan." Oasis is one of the most underrated bands of all time. It is telling about the lack of musical taste that Americans have when Oasis is still one of the biggest bands in the rest of the world, but Americans don't care unless singers are blonde pop princesses with big boobs or Justin Timberlake (who sucks). Listen to Oasis and do yourself a favor.

Hey Don't just sit there and do nothing.

GET OFF YOUR BUTT AND BE A

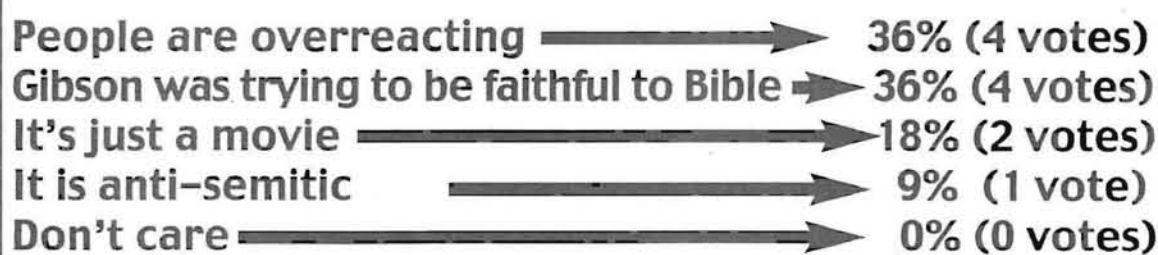


Work for The Current, you



What do the readers think: Results from the weekly web poll:

What is your view of "The Passion of the Christ?"



Results via www.thecurrentonline.com

*www.thecurrentonline.com does not limit votes per person and the poll is not a scientific sampling.

Write a letter to the editor
Write a letter to the editor
Write a letter to the editor
Write a letter to the editor

HEALTH

Dying to be thin Eating disorders examined

BY MELISSA MCCRARY
Features Associate

February is full of many holidays and events, including Valentine's Day, Presidents Day, Black History Month and Mardi Gras. One event that many people do not recognize is the National Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

The National Eating Disorders Week is held from Feb. 22 to Feb. 27.

Numerous non-profit groups and health organizations, like the National Eating Disorders Organization and National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC), come together to teach people and help those who might have an eating disorder.

Different organizations around the world work to educate about different disorders, the dangers that lie in these diseases, and how to offer support to individuals who are suffering from weight problems.

People suffer from several types of eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating and excessive diet practices.

The National Eating Disorders Organization reported that in the United States, five to 10 million girls and women and one million boys and men are currently struggling with eating disorders.

While all eating disorders can cause serious health problems, bulimia is one of the most dangerous.

Michelle Schmidt, coordinator for UM-St. Louis Health Services and the Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program, said that many factors, including physical, psychological and social issues, could cause a person to suffer from a disorder.

Low self-esteem and a negative body image are major contributors to the development of these diseases.

People suffering from bulimia will usually cause themselves to vomit or practice other purging methods to avoid gaining weight. Many individuals suffering from this disorder are unaware of the serious health risks that they are putting on their bodies.

Not only does this disorder continue to hurt the inside of a person's body, but it also can lead to dental complications, like tooth erosion.

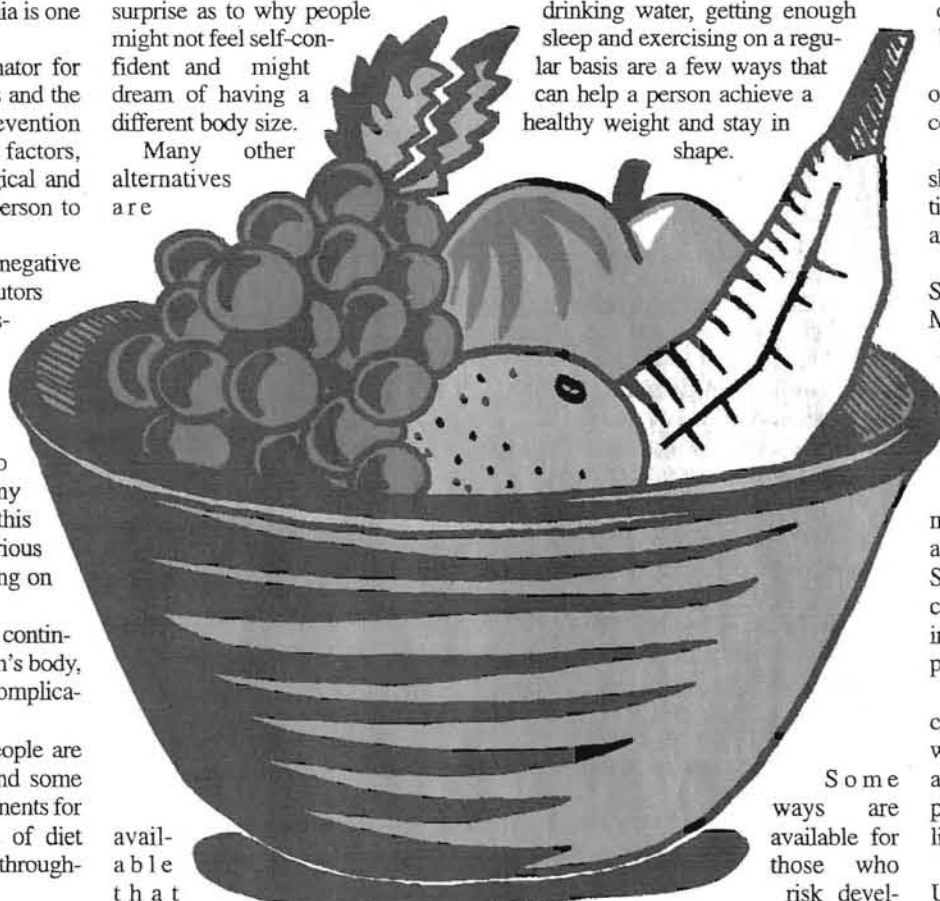
In today's world, many people are obsessed with their weight and some are dying to be thin. Advertisements for fitness equipment or posters of diet supplements surround models throughout the media.

The United States is one of the leading countries whose citizens suffer

from obesity. It is not a very big surprise as to why people might not feel self-confident and might dream of having a different body size.

Many other alternatives are

healthy. Eating well-balanced meals, drinking water, getting enough sleep and exercising on a regular basis are a few ways that can help a person achieve a healthy weight and stay in shape.



available that can help people lose weight and stay

order. It is possible to prevent eating disorders or receive special treatment before the disorder becomes chronic.

UM-St. Louis hosted a week recognizing awareness of eating disorders, centered on a theme called "Get Real."

The theme was called "Get Real" to show students the importance of getting real expectations, real information and real help.

University Health and Counseling Services held an informational table on Monday, Feb. 23 and Thursday, Feb. 26, in the MSC from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Mental and physical health professionals offered advice and information about dieting and health issues.

"Students who think that they might have a problem or need some advice can always stop by Health Services and talk to someone who could help them and can take a screening to see whether or not they have a problem," Schmidt said.

Becoming familiar with the severe consequences of eating disorders, as well as talking to friends and family and receiving encouragement about a person's health could save his or her life.

For more information, contact the University Health Services at 516-5671 or Counseling Services at 516-6711.

Students rally for pro-choice issues

BY STEFANIE TAYLOR
Staff Writer

UM-St. Louis' Institute for Women's and Gender Studies is co-sponsoring the March for Freedom of Choice on Sunday, April 25, 2004. The Institute is acting as a delegation, which is a group responsible for bringing 20 marchers to Washington, D.C. to protest what they consider anti-women's rights legislation.

Missy Yearian, sophomore, English, is one of the representatives from the Women's and Gender Studies program who is recruiting marchers. "Every person counts," Yearian said. "It's important for us to make our voices heard."

The event, which is nationally sponsored by the National Organization of Women (NOW), NARAL, and the Planned Parenthood Federation (PPF), hopes to bring one million men and women together to

demonstrate the overwhelming support for women's rights.

"It's only costing students \$45 to ride the bus there," Yearian said. "The participants will sleep overnight on the bus, so no money will be spent on hotels." Student tickets have been discounted from the \$100 public ticket cost.

Michelle Stone, senior, psychology, explained the need for such a large demonstration. "The issue of freedom of choice shouldn't be an issue anymore," she said. "There is a Supreme Court precedent, but it keeps coming up in government."

The Missouri March for Choice Coalition (MMCC), formed by state and local chapters of NOW, NARAL, and PPF, has asked campus groups to participate in recruiting students, faculty and staff. The MMCC recognizes that the original Supreme Court precedent (Roe v. Wade) still allows women the freedom to choose abortion, but

the organization feels that state laws are chipping away at women's rights.

Lisa Harrison, president of the Missouri Chapter of NOW, described the Missouri government. "The lawmakers have been trying to erode [Roe v. Wade] since 1973," she said. She listed several Missouri legal cases that limit a woman's accessibility to an abortion provider.

"The government we have now is very anti-choice," Harrison said. "They'll do anything they can to chip away at the freedom of choice. They try real hard to make abortion look like an uninviting option. They limit the funding to public health facilities, which provide abortion. They even dictate what color a ceiling can be painted or how many shrubs an abortion provider can have around an office. They want to make these providers look hostile."

see MARCH, page 7

UMSL Alum-Net has the inside job track

BY GARY SOHN
Staff Writer

What student would not appreciate connections to professionals in their field of study? What if these professionals were also UM-St. Louis alumni?

The recently developed UMSL Alum-Net program allows students to exchange information, develop professional contacts in their field of study and, most importantly, apply what they have learned in the classroom.

UMSL Alum-Net is a partnership between the UM-St. Louis Alumni Association and the Student Alumni Association that links current students with alumni leaders. Joe Flees, coordinator for Student Life and University Relations, is also the coordinator for UMSL Alum-Net. Flees said that the program started last January for students who wanted to meet with leaders in their studies.

"This program is formed to help students to learn about career paths. Students meet mentors and learn what it takes to be a doctor, psychologist, lawyer...and not just degree-wise but also the challenges they face in decisions they have made," Flees said.

Alumni who are participating in UMSL Alum-Net, also known as "mentors," are some of the top professionals in their fields. "One of our mentors is Kirk Richter, Treasurer of Sigma Aldrich Chemical Company," Flees said. "Marty Hendin, head of community relations of the St. Louis Cardinals, is also a mentor."

Another mentor available on campus is Dr. Stephen R. Moehrle, assistant professor of accounting and Vice President of UMSL Alum-Net.

Besides holding both a Ph.D. and a Master's degree in business in accounting from Indiana University, Moehrle also has an MBA from St. Louis University and a BSBA in accounting from UM-St. Louis. Moehrle has published articles and books, including Business Horizon, The CPA Journal and The Financial Analysts Journal. He is also a member of the American Accounting Association, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants. He was awarded the Indiana University William G. Panschar Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award; Indiana University School of Business Associate Instructor Teaching Award; Indiana University Lieber Memorial Teaching Associate Award and UM-St. Louis' Douglas E. Durand Award for Research Excellence.

Moehrle said that he heard about UMSL Alum-Net from Joe Flees.

"I indicated in previous e-mailing about being an alum mentor."

Moehrle said. "I talk [with students] about my career experiences, help them on what career's best for them, and provide a viewpoint who's been in their shoes."

The importance of UMSL Alum-Net is to "capitalize on the 64,000 alum network to bring tangible value to lives and careers of our current student body," said Moehrle.

One student who is benefiting from some of those "tangible values" is D'Andre Braddix, freshman, criminology. Braddix said that the UMSL Alum-Net program has given him the opportunity to learn more about being a detective, as he had the chance to observe what police do on a regular basis.

"I got to sit in an actual warrant issuing. I was able to read the issuing. And I was able to understand what was going on because of the terminology I learned at UMSL. The experience allowed me to use my terminology," Braddix said.

Braddix also said that the program was not time consuming.

"It's a really great program that doesn't require a big commitment. You can spend less than five hours a week if you want. And my mentors were very accessible and helpful. They said to call them with any questions I might have."

Flees said that because the program is relatively new, they are currently looking for both students (mentees) and Alumni (mentors).

"This is our ground-breaking year, and that's why a lot of people don't know about [UMSL Alum-Net]. We've e-mailed Res Life, Student Government and the Honors College," Flees said.

UMSL Alum-Net currently has 25 alumni and 15 students participating in the program. He also said that just because the program may not have a mentor in a particular field, students could still participate.

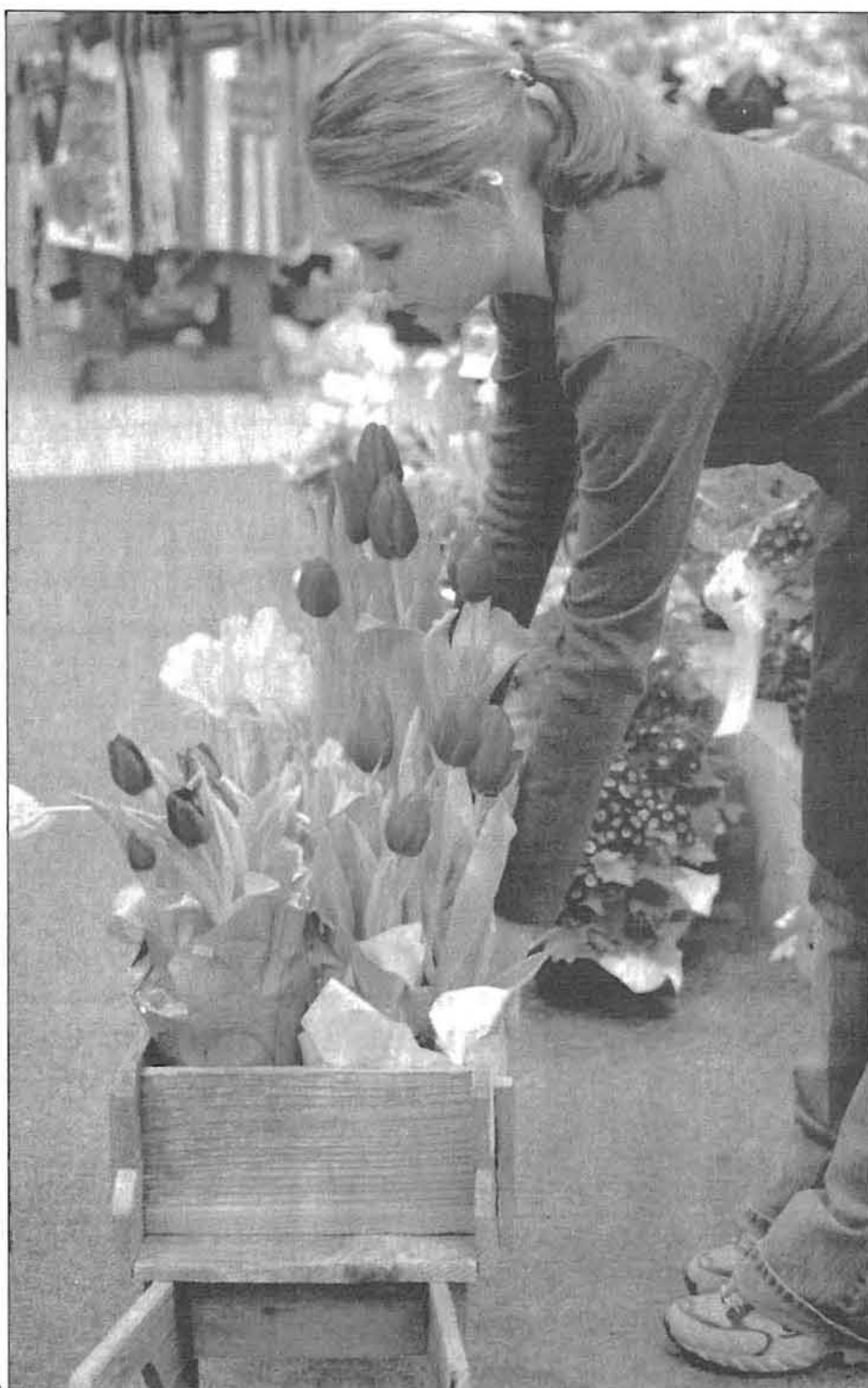
"We've recruited some mentors independently," Flees said, "and we are always looking for more mentors. And the program is designed to accommodate the mentor so the mentoring relationship may be e-mail or job shadowing. It's up to the mentor."

Moehrle encouraged anyone interested in mentoring, as he said that there are many benefits for both the student and mentor.

"This is a low-cost, high-benefit opportunity to help our students, our university, our community, and what they'll find out is that they're helping themselves as well," he said. "They could potentially see employees or find their future CEO."

Alumni who are interested in becoming mentors and students who are looking to be mentees should stop by the Student Life office, located on the third floor of the MSC building, or contact Joe Flees at 516-4535 or jef@umsl.edu.

Springtime is almost here...



Casey Landwehr, supervisor of the south county Flowerama, arranges flowers in a display for spring. February and March are popular months for gardening enthusiasts to begin picking out seeds, bulbs and plants for their own little Eden. Some gardeners go to flower shops for ideas of what to grow year to year.

Casey Ulrich/The Current

Biking club extreme fun

BY JAMES DAUGHERTY
Staff Writer

For those of you who love biking, or those of you who would like to do something entertaining to get fit, the UM-St. Louis Cycling Club could be for you. The Cycling Club started a little more than a year and a half ago with a few people who would like to ride and now encompasses four distinct categories, mountain biking, recreational biking, commuter biking and racing.

Andres Puente heads the mountain biking section and caters more to those who enjoy camping, nature and high impact sports. The group rides trails all over the state, from Castlewood Park here in St. Louis to Berryman in East Central Missouri. The Berryman trail was 25 miles long and took five hours to complete, but that is how the club likes it.

This spring the club has undergone some difficulty planning because club president Brian Fox was called to active duty and is now serving in Iraq, but Puente still has plans to be active as a club.

"This spring we are looking to go to Utah or Colorado to bike some around the west. We're looking for medium to serious mountain bikers to make the trip, including some from Colombia."

St. Louis dances to the rhythm of Mardi Gras

BY MELISSA MCCRARY
Features Associate

The twenty-fifth annual St. Louis Mardi Gras event began with a bang and ended with a mess.

The Grand Parade, sponsored by Charter Communications, kicked off on Saturday. On Feb. 21 at 11 a.m. Many St. Louis celebrities, such as athletes and newscasters, led the floats.

One of the celebrities who surprised the crowd was Ozzie Smith, former St. Louis Cardinals baseball player.

About one hundred different creative floats, several marching bands and numerous participants walked the parade route.

This year's theme focused around

"Celebrate Saint Louis." The event began on South Broadway, passed Busch Stadium and ended on 7th Street.

Despite the cold temperatures and closing times, many St. Louis residents attended events throughout the evening.

Hundreds of people crowded the streets, visiting bars and nightclubs throughout Historic Souldard.

The shouting "Throw me some beads" could be heard throughout the masses of people.

St. Louis police issued 244 summonses to revelers, arrested 23 people for suspicion of crimes and arrested a man in connection to eight different robberies.

"I think that there were probably more people last year because the

shirts weren't flying up like they have done in previous years," Deidre Bauer, junior, education, said.

One of the major problems of this year's Mardi Gras, reported by local news channels, was the underage drinking.

Some Souldard residents and Mardi Gras vendors helped crews clean up trash on Sunday morning as early as 7 a.m.

The weekend festivities did not put an end to the Mardi Gras celebrations.

Other bars such as Big Daddy's, Lil' Nikki's, Molly's and the Souldard Ale House continued to offer admission and drink specials on Fat Tuesday.

Chad Kreikmeier, manager of the John D. McGurks Pub located on Russell St. in Souldard, described Mardi Gras weekend events and busi-

ness sales.

"The weather was perfect for February," Kreikmeier said. "We had a DJ and many tents [at McGurks] set up on Saturday. I would guess that over 1,000 people were in and out throughout the evening. It's been so crazy that it has almost been hard to keep up with."

Mardi Gras concluded with a night parade, which lasted until midnight on Tuesday.

M. Dawn Blaloch, graduate student, math, reported that while she had attended the celebration in previous years, she had no desire to participate in Mardi Gras festivities this year.

"I hate the chaos and crowds. My boyfriend went and brought me some beads back," Blaloch said.

Those who did not celebrate the 2004 Mardi Gras in downtown St. Louis or Souldard took a wilder side by visiting the famed Bourbon Street in

New Orleans.

Although the week in New Orleans has been extremely rainy, thousands of people from around the world visited the French Quarter, watched the parade, ate Cajun food, dressed in costumes and learned about how the tradition got started.

With so many daring people in St. Louis and countless strands of beads, this year's party people can only wonder what next year's events will entail.



Mardi Gras revelers await the chance to catch beads thrown from passing floats.



Outstretched hands were everywhere during the parade.

MARCH, from page 6

The MMCC acts as a special interest group, which lobbies Missouri and federal governments to allow for more freedom and more funding. Currently, a woman in Missouri may not legally receive an abortion after 22 weeks of term, unless there is a serious risk to the mother's health or life. In addition, institutions, such as religious-based hospitals, are free to refuse patients who request an abortion.

Several legal cases in Missouri have attempted to place more restrictions on the availability of abortion. For example, in 1976, Planned

Parenthood of Missouri v. Danforth attempted to impose husband's consent for any female to receive abortion services. Missouri already requires that a minor have permission from a parent, and current legislators are considering enforcing a waiting period for abortion services.

"We feel that a minor couldn't safely get parental consent in all cases," Harrison said. "In cases of incest and parental abuse it would be safer to get consent from a non-threatening adult." The Missouri law also requires that the consenting adult accompany the

female minor to the procedure.

"Missouri is the worst state for abortion providers," Harrison said. "We hope to mobilize men and women to get out and the word out to the Bush administration that not all Americans agree with their policy on abortion." Currently, there are only six abortion providers in the state of Missouri.

The Bush administration has demonstrated its anti-choice policies by proposing pro-life legislation and by appointing anti-choice leaders. On Nov. 5, 2003, President Bush signed

the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban, which limits late-term abortions and criminalizes women who have abortions performed during their third trimester, unless the woman's life is in danger. Previously, in March 2001, Bush closed the White House Office for Women's Initiative and Outreach, a women's rights program started by his predecessor, President Bill Clinton.

Angie Postal, Community Organizer for NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri, stands in opposition to the Bush administration.

"Pro-choice does not mean pro-abortion. Pro choice means that because no one should be able to impose their religious or moral beliefs on anyone else. Every woman, in consultation with her doctor, her family or her faith, should have the right to make decisions about her own body and her own life without government interference."

Stone, who is concerned about what she titles "a general apathy about women's rights," agrees with Postal. "I

may never have an abortion, but I want to know that it's an option. If someone doesn't agree with abortion, they shouldn't have one. Everyone has to find where it fits in their own values, but there shouldn't be govern-

ment

restrictions."

Postal encourages pro-choice believers to attend the March for Freedom of Choice. "Students and non-students alike should become engaged in the fight to protect repro-

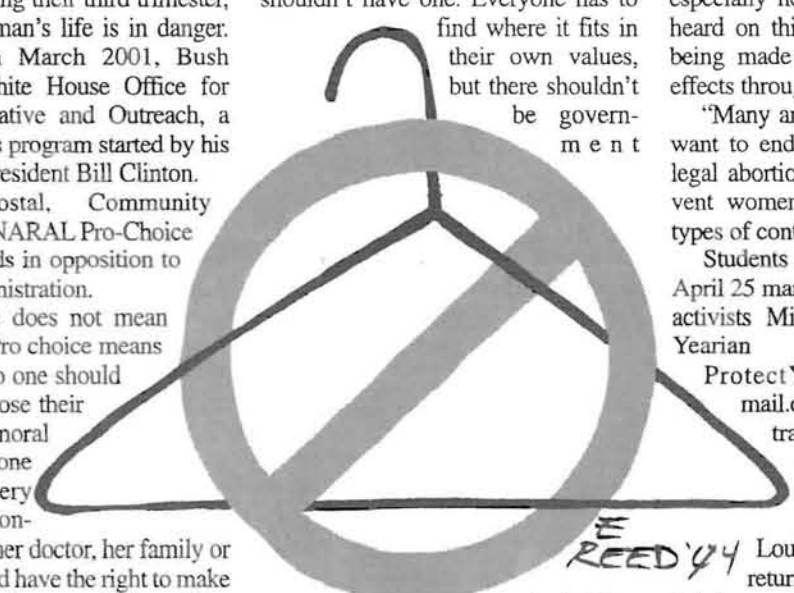
ductive freedoms because choice is currently under serious attack across the country," Postal said. "Students especially need to make their voices heard on this issue, as the decisions being made today will have lasting effects throughout their lives."

"Many anti-choice forces not only want to end women's rights to safe, legal abortions, but also wish to prevent women from accessing certain types of contraception," Postal said.

Students who wish to attend the April 25 march should contact student activists Michelle Stone and Missy Yearian via e-mail at


ProtectYourRights2004@hotmail.com. Forty buses will be traveling from Missouri with an anticipated 2,000 Missourians. Ten buses will be leaving from St.

Louis on Sat., April 24, and returning Mon., April 26. The tickets are available on a first-come basis. The Institute for Women and Gender Studies will be presenting more information at a table on the main floor of the MSC on Tuesday, March 2.



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NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

BIKING, from page 6

The trip will keep expenses low, going by plane only if necessary. "If all else fails, I'll get my car and we can split gas money," said Puente.

The length of the trip should be around a week, and the group intends to camp most of the time in parks while there. If your tastes are not quite so extreme, though, there are always the more laid back recreational bikers and commuters.

Jenny Heinz is the director of the Rec Riders, and she is always looking for new students to join the club.

"We go on trips in the area and do

anywhere from five to 15 miles. Hopefully we can get some new members who enjoy riding for fitness and for fun," Heinz said.

The Rec Riders focus primarily on parks in this general vicinity, for example Creve Coeur Park, Forest Park and Katy Trail in St. Charles. Even though it is recreational biking, it is excellent for fitness and very low impact on joints like knees and ankles.

The club promotes community fitness and safety such as helmets, proper air pressure and biking in groups.

The club is also interested in commuters who come to school by cycling. There is a section devoted to them, so that they have a support group and can potentially make riding partners.

With time, the club would like to see the racing component expand "when we have people who enjoy cycling, eventually they may want to begin racing. But you have to start somewhere," Heinz said. You can find photos and contact information on the club homepage at Umsl.edu/~bikeumsl.

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Kevin Ottley/The Current



Mike Sherwin/The Current

ABOVE: Fat Tuesday parade riders toss handfuls of beads to students waiting on the lawn in front of the MSC. RIGHT: Despite stiff defense, this student is all smiles as she attempts to run past her opposing players. The action is from last Thursday's powder puff football game.



Kevin Ottley/The Current

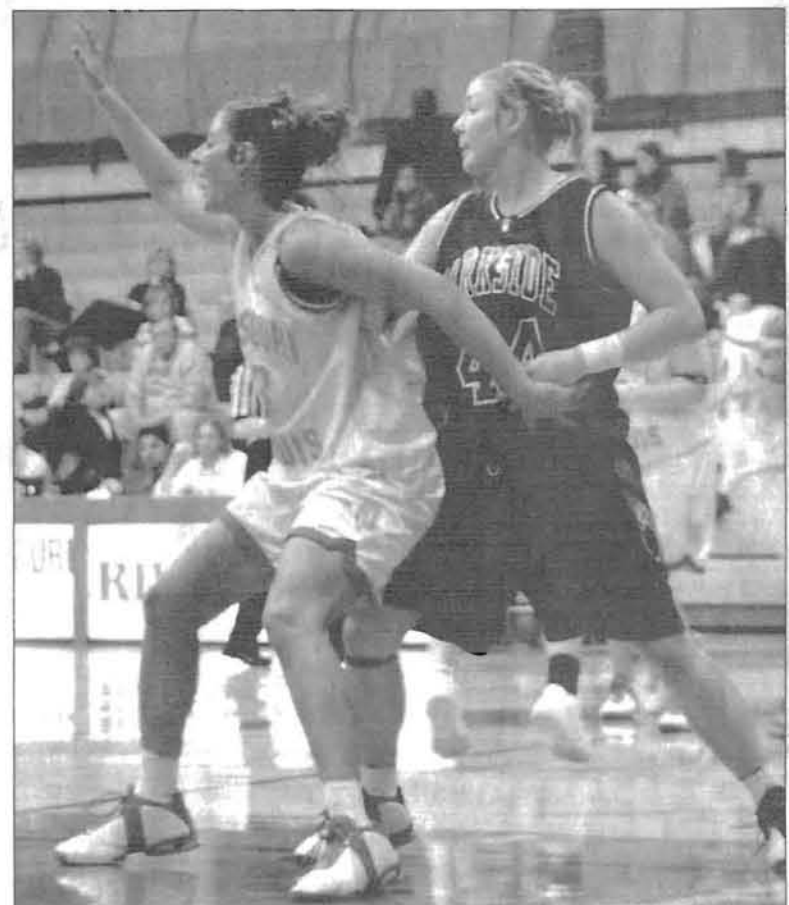
Jan Mayer and Benny Suen reigned supreme after being crowned queen and king respectively at the 2004 Homecoming Dance on Friday night at the Westport Sheraton.

Homecoming Week February 2004



Mike Sherwin/The Current

ABOVE: Steve Brown sings the Temptations tune "My Girl" during the Big Man on Campus contest held Wednesday in the Pilot House. The annual contest has sororities sponsor men to appear in a pageant, with proceeds going to charity. Brown was sponsored by the Zeta Tau Alpha sorority. Alex Kerford was later announced the winner of the BMOC contest.



Jesse Gater/The Current

At heart, homecoming is really about supporting the teams. Here, Debi Dibella, senior/forward, calls for the ball as she works around a defender in the Riverwomen's loss to Wisconsin-Parkside on Thursday.

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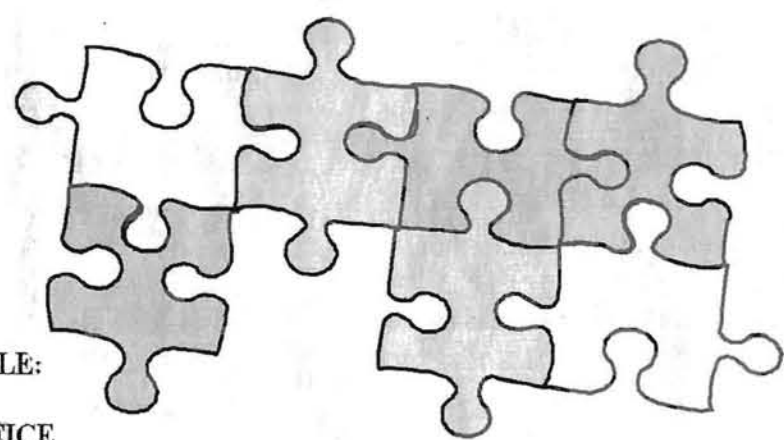
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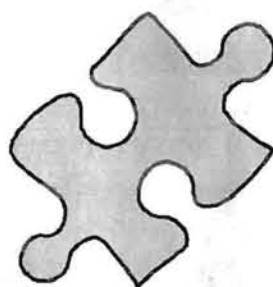


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SPORTS

Weak first half leads to 83-63 loss for Rivermen vs. SIU-E

BY JAMES DAUGHERTY
Staff Writer

The UM-St. Louis Rivermen lost an ugly game to conference foe Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville 83-63 Saturday, Feb. 21. The defeat gives a bleak outlook on making the conference tournament for the Rivermen. The team is now 9-16 on the season and 5-13 in the conference.

The Rivermen began the game slow, giving up a 13-0 lead in the first five minutes. The Rivermen started to make a steady comeback and got to within eight points with 9:15 left in the first half at 19-11, but then went cold again over the next three min-

utes and were outscored 8-0 during that time, bringing the score to 27-11.

For the remainder of the half, the shooting remained poor for the Rivermen at just 21.7% from the field—including 0-7 on free throws. SIU-Edwardsville entered halftime commanding a 42-22 point lead.

In the second half the Rivermen started with more energy, getting put-backs and offensive rebounds. To begin the half both Sherome Cole and David Watkins got their own offensive rebounds and gave UM-St. Louis the first basket of the second half.

With 15 minutes to go in the game, the Rivermen were down 52-27. Trying to spark a comeback with

good defense, they had two steals by Jonathan Griffin and a steal and a block by David Watkins to go on a 14-4 run over the next five minutes.

The lead was cut to 14 points, but the Rivermen could not keep the run going and missed several chances to continue closing the gap with an offensive foul by Josh Hardin. SIU-Edwardsville took advantage of the change of momentum and, with just seven minutes left to play, pushed their lead all the way out to 23, going up 73-50.

They held on to their lead the rest of the game and came out on top 83-63. When asked the deciding factor in the defeat, coach Pilz answered:

"We just didn't show up to play."

The stats reflect this statement from both ends of the floor. During the second half the Rivermen shot slightly better at 36.9% and a much better 44.4% on 3-pointers.

Unfortunately, SIU-Edwardsville also shot better in the second half. After shooting a solid 51.9% in the first half, they went 16-23 in the second half, which is an incredible 69.6%. A percentage that high would indicate that you are not putting the ball up from very far away, and that is exactly what happened.

SIU-Edwardsville scored 40 points in the paint, almost half of their total. Griffin led the Rivermen with 17 points, and Watkins contributed 11.

R-women lose hope for post-season play

BY GRETCHEN MOORE
Sports Editor

The SIU-Edwardsville Cougars defeated UM-St. Louis 80-54 on Saturday afternoon, a loss that ends the Riverwomen's hopes of making the GLVC Tournament this season.

An early spurt by SIU-E in the first half gave the Cougars the early advantage. With UM-St. Louis leading 5-4, SIU-E went on a 9-0 run and led 13-5. The Riverwomen kept the game close and were within 11 points with four minutes left in the half, when the Cougars closed the half with a 10-1 run and led 42-38 at halftime.

"We didn't play good defense which was counteracted by them shooting well. We were against some pretty tough odds being at their place. They knew that if they win they were guaranteed a bid so they were really inspired," coach Lee Buchanan reflected on his team's performance.

SIU-E came out in the second half and scored the first five points. Over the last four minutes of the first half and the first five minutes of the second half, SIU-E outscored UM-St. Louis 15-1, limiting the Riverwomen to no field goals during that nine-minute stretch. From there, the Cougars cruised for the 80-54 victory.

Coach Buchanan put 35 hours of prep time into this crucial game for the Riverwomen reviewing films, stats and scouting players. The Cougars put up a tough fight, shooting 57% from the three-point line.

Iesha Billups led UM-St. Louis with 14 points, and Kali Birkey added 14 points and seven rebounds. SIU-E had four players in double figures, led by Jessica Robert with 17 points.

"It was a very disappointing loss. Your season always comes down to one or two games per year and this was our really important game. If we would have beaten them we still would have had a shot at a playoff spot," Buchanan said.

The Riverwomen fall to 6-19 on the season and 3-15 in the GLVC. The loss also eliminates UM-St. Louis' chance to a bid to the GLVC Tournament this season. The Riverwomen will close out the regular season with home games against Wisconsin-Parkside and Saint Joseph's.



Ronnie Banks



Tim Blankenship



Debi Dibella



Kevin Nordmann

End of an Era: Senior basketball players reflect on their past, look forward to future

BY JAMES DAUGHERTY
Staff Writer

With just one more game left for the men's and women's basketball teams, some of the players are thinking about their difficult season. Some are thinking about regrouping for another year of competition. The coaches are thinking about committing their new recruits for the future. There are some though, perhaps a little more nostalgic than the others.

For the seniors on this year's squads, the end of an era has arrived. Ronnie Banks, Kevin Nordmann, Tim Blankenship and Debi Dibella all ended their collegiate careers on Saturday against St. Joseph's. It has been a time of contemplation for these athletes, and a time of considering new steps in life. Their thoughts on these changes have been as diverse as their roles on the basketball court.

Nordmann had this to say about his season ending:

"I'm glad I had the opportunity to play here my last year of eligibility. For one this is a higher level of play, and the competition was much better. I'm just really thankful that Coach Pilz took the chance on me and I had the opportunity."

Blankenship expressed similar feelings. "Unfortunately, this was my first year and also my last. I am thankful though that I could have this chance."

Banks expressed gratitude as well, but his outlook was a little bit more melancholy.

"I don't feel good about how [the season] turned out, but it was worth it...It didn't turn out how I wanted, and I'm not satisfied, but we did progress a lot."

- Ronnie Banks

"I don't feel good about how it turned out, but it was worth it. I had some good experiences and some bad experiences and saw different players and different coaches. It didn't turn out how I wanted, and I'm not satisfied,

but we did progress a lot."

Something that they all had in common was expressing gratitude to coach Pilz.

"I'm glad a guy came to coach me that has a good heart and cares for us as individuals. He's a good example. He takes care of his kids at home, then takes care of us here," Banks said.

Their next steps in life are also very diverse. Nordmann plans to be here again.

"Next year I hope to come back and watch UM-St. Louis play in the National Tournament," Nordmann said.

Banks also hoped the team would be able to reach a National Championship under coach Pilz one day, but he is moving into another area.

"I might try to play overseas because I never reached my potential in college. I would like to play until I don't have anything left, and right now, I've got a lot left. I've got room to get better, and I can get better," Banks said.

We may not see Nordmann or Banks next year, but for Blankenship, little will change.

"I'm entering my third year of optometry school. I will still be here studying," Blankenship said.

Whether you will be here studying with us again, or playing basketball overseas, we wish the seniors the best of luck.

GRETCHEN MOORE
Sports Editor
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Send me an e-mail:
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WEB
Check out the R-men and R-women sports at
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Hockey ends disappointing season

Injuries and coaching changes set hockey off to bad start for '03-'04

BY DAVE SECKMAN
Staff Writer

Hockey is notoriously known as one of the toughest sports around. Checking, fighting and bickering are just some of the every-game occurrences a hockey player must go through. It is hard to make a name for yourself in any league, and it can be especially tough to do it under these very demanding types of circumstances, but UM-St. Louis hockey has done just that in the past few seasons. The UM-St. Louis club hockey team has gone from what was virtually a non-existent pushover of a program, to what now is being recognized nationwide for hardnosed outstanding efforts on the ice.

Just last year, the hockey team accomplished what is considered to be one of the best seasons that any hockey team could have when it virtually cruised through the league and found itself in the finals of the national club hockey tournament. So it would seem as if the hockey team was on its way to prominence. Right?

Wrong. Just this year the team suffered a series of key injuries and coaching changes to begin what it thought could have been a season that would have eclipsed even last year's marks.

The team finished the season with an 11-18-5 mark and failed to make the tournament for the first time in the last three seasons.

Brad Warlick, team member, com- see HOCKEY, page 11

Off-season training heats up as spring lurks around the corner

UM-St. Louis' athletic teams use the off-season to condition players and work on potential team weaknesses

BY DAVE SECKMAN
Staff Writer

As spring rolls around the corner, most students on campus have anything but working hard on their minds, except for the UM-St. Louis athletic teams who are now in their off-season. Working hard is the most important thing for them to do.

For teams such as men's and women's golf, soccer, women's tennis and women's volleyball, this is one of the most important times of their season. The off-season is a time where any team can slack off if it wanted, but if you want to get ahead, it is an intricate part of the season. For any player, this is the most important time of the year to get your body back into shape and your mind back into your respective sport.

For coaches, it gives a chance to change things around and to work on the weak parts of each team's game. Most coaches take the off-season training to a maximum so that when their teams go into the summer they have a solid base to work off as they prepare for the upcoming season in the fall. Many teams work out up to four days during the week on certain things such as strength training, speed training, weight-lifting and individual skill work. Each team has its own way

of looking at and training during the off-season.

For head men's soccer coach Dan King, it is especially important for many reasons.

"This is the part of the season that gives us a good chance to work on the things that need fixing. Our team has three areas of concern that I would like to address, the first being overall speed and strength, the second being composure in our own offensive third of the field and the last but not least important would be to find a consistent rhythm of play," King said.

Along with coach King, recently elected head women's tennis coach Jason Hanes had this to say about his team and the off-season.

"This is a time where our bodies need to adapt to our workouts. Practicing three days a week along with weight-lifting and sprint workouts are essential for us to pick up and move on from where we started only a few weeks ago," said Hanes.

Women's soccer players and their head coach Beth Goetz are currently practicing three days a week on overall team fitness and strength.

"We usually do recovery sprint workouts once or so a week, followed by plyometrics and short sprint workouts on another day, and on the third day of practice I like to get the girls involved in anaerobic

workouts doing anything from football to other team sports," Coach Goetz said.

Women's volleyball is currently working out three days a week, which includes several workouts at 6 a.m.

The men's and women's golf teams are also working hard to improve. Although the men's team is currently about to enter the main part of the season, coach Trittler was still very eager to talk.

"We hope to qualify for the super-regional later on this season and we are looking to be able to finish at the top of the conference. We are staying very optimistic about our chances. Hopefully we can get through to the playoffs and then possibly move on to the NCAA championships at the end of the spring semester," Trittler said.

The women's golf team is also working hard at the links, and although it is not their main part of the season, they are still optimistic about making large steps up the ladder toward the end of the season.

Many of the teams are not yet able to practice with their respective equipment due to NCAA rules that prohibit official team play until mid-March. Hard work pays off and all of the student athletes are working hard to try to make the difference that will lead them to the top of the conference.

All roads lead to San Antonio

Students share opinions on favorites for fast-approaching NCAA final four tournament

BY DAVE SECKMAN
Staff Writer

It is bracket time once again for you basketball enthusiasts. So far, this year has seen more top-25 upsets than in the past 7 years, which is making life very hard for the college basketball analyst. With this much craziness, it is hard to say if anyone has a chance at actually guessing every game right during the NCAA tournament coming just weeks from now in late March.

Who is to say that there is no chance, though? There is always that one team, or that one miracle upset within the first set of rounds, that screws up almost everyone's bracket; do Valparaiso or Gonzaga ring any bells for you? These upsets leave only a handful of bold guessers left to "duke" it out. So, who are the teams to watch out for this year? What about those teams that will be a sure bet? Who is for sure about anything? That is probably the best question asked.

When it comes to guessing who will win it, everyone has their own way of doing it. Whether you chose to look on ESPN or just like to go on pure guesswork, there is no fail-safe method of choice. To pick one winner out of 64 teams and a whole bunch of upsets in between is not only difficult, it is down right impossible. So, who are the best teams to go after this march?

Brent Essner, sophomore, has a

good idea of whom he thinks is the best bet in March.

"Well, I would like to see Kentucky win it all, but I don't think they have enough depth in their bench this year to pull it off. I think Stanford and St. Joe's definitely will be out by the second round because a team with a perfect record never goes all the way. I hate to admit it, but my gut feeling predicts Duke in the end," Essner said.

Well, to start there is always the easy ones that everyone should pick such as Stanford, Pittsburgh, Duke, Gonzaga, Kentucky, UCONN, Mississippi State and this year's new powerhouse, St. Joe's, just to name a few. These are probably sure first- and second-round wins. Then there are the few other teams such as Illinois, Providence, Wake Forest, Memphis, N.C. State, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Arizona and Cincinnati that are almost sure bets to go into at least the second round, but have shown weaknesses more so than the others this year. But, who is to say that they might not even make it out of the first few?

UM-St. Louis student Jason Barclay, senior, had this to say about the tournament.

"Though basketball is probably my least favorite sport, I would probably have to go with a SEC team like Kentucky," Barclay said.

see FINAL FOUR, page 11

Rivermen baseball goes 1-2 in pre-season

BY GRETCHEN MOORE
Sports Editor

The UM-St. Louis baseball team got its first action outside, playing three games against two nationally ranked opponents at the 2004 Diamond Classic. The Rivermen bounced back on Sunday against Florida Southern and held on for a 6-5 win over the 15th ranked Moccasins. That came after two hard losses on Saturday, losing to Florida Southern in the first game, 12-2, and in the second game, 17-5, to host Armstrong Atlantic State.

In the first game Saturday, the Rivermen gave up single runs in the first two innings against Florida Southern and then took the lead in the third. Tony Grana got a three-run homer for the Rivermen in the third inning to give UM-St. Louis a 3-2 lead.

Matt Kueny, starting pitcher for the Rivermen, faced a tough Florida

Southern lineup when the Moccasins came right back in the bottom half of the inning and scored four runs, all coming with two outs. Tony Landano came in to pitch for Kueny. Landano closed the inning with two more runs by Florida Southern. The Moccasins then added one run in the fourth before Mike Lantzy came in to pitch for Landano. The Moccasins' tough offense brought three more runs in the fifth for the 12-3 lead.

Grana went 1-for-5 with three RBIs on the home run and Colby Hughes went 3-for-4 with one run scored for UM-St. Louis. Starting pitcher Kueny took the loss for the Rivermen.

Against Armstrong Atlantic, the Pirates came out in the first inning and got a quick lead, getting a two-run homer and two RBI singles in the first inning for a 4-0 lead. Starting pitcher for the Rivermen, Steven McCoy, held the Pirates in the second inning. In the third, UM-St. Louis would cut that lead in

half on a two-run double by Jonathan Mercer to make it a 4-2 game.

Armstrong Atlantic then led the bottom half of the third with three straight solo home runs. Eric Michaelis came in to pitch for McCoy after two more runs in the bottom of the fourth. The Pirates got another run in the fifth to lead 11-2.

Dennis Allen came in to pitch for Michaelis at the beginning of the sixth, when the Pirates got off two more home runs, making it a 13-2 game before UM-St. Louis made a comeback in the seventh.

Scott Miller led off with a double, and later in the inning, the Rivermen got RBI singles from Scott Davis, Logan Hughes and Tom Anderson to make it a 13-5 game.

Josh Green pitched in the seventh and Dan Kriegshauser took the mound in the eighth when AASU added two runs in both innings for the 17-5 win. Starting pitcher McCoy took the loss for UM-St. Louis.

Coach Jim Brady reflected on his team's disappointing performance.

"Saturday was a disaster from start to finish. We looked like a team who hasn't stepped on a field in five months. Our pitching stunk. Not being on the mound to throw contributed to that. Pitchers have to provide a chance for the team to win."

In Sunday's game against Florida Southern, UM-St. Louis got a good starting performance from Josh Morgan who kept the Florida Southern Bats quiet, long enough for the Rivermen to establish a lead.

It was a scoreless game going into the bottom of the fourth, when UM-St. Louis brought home the first run of the game. Anderson drew a lead off walk and moved to third on a single by Scott Sanders. Anderson then came around to score on a wild pitch for a 1-0 Rivermen lead after four innings.

The Rivermen then capitalized in the fifth, scoring five runs in the bottom

half of the inning. Grana got the inning started with a base hit and then stole second. Grana came around to score on an RBI single by Mercer. Logan Hughes followed with another RBI single and Mike Wulff belted a three-run homer for a 6-0 UM-St. Louis lead.

The Rivermen rotated a few players around in the seventh when they brought in Johnathan Pate to pitch. The Moccasins chipped away at the Rivermen lead, scoring two runs in that inning to make it a 6-2 game.

Florida Southern threatened again in the eighth. They got three more runs to cut the UM-St. Louis lead to just one at 6-5 before Colby Hughes came on in relief and got a strike out to end the inning and the threat in the eighth.

Colby Hughes came back in the ninth and got three strikeouts to end the game and pick up his first save of the year and gave Morgan and the Rivermen their first victories of the season, 6-5 over Florida Southern.

"Colby (Hughes) was lights out for us. He was striking out anyone with a bat in their hand. Wulff was outstanding with a three-run homer that put us over the top. I can't ask for more than what he gave us. That just shows you the great senior leadership we have on this team," coach Brady said.

The Rivermen are now 1-2 on the season and will be in action again this weekend when UM-St. Louis travels to play a three-game series at Central Arkansas.

"This time of year we just need to keep playing where it gets to be routine and executing game situations. We need to learn how to win and execute. We have proven to do this in the past and there is no reason we shouldn't do it again. We just need to go down to Arkansas and pitch well and then play well in the three games against Central Arkansas and we'll be fine," Brady said about the upcoming road trip to Central Arkansas.

Cardinals prepare for opening day with Grapefruit League games in Florida

BY CAMPBELL MCLAURIN
Staff Writer

The St. Louis Cardinals will begin their 2004 spring training season on Tuesday, March 2 at the Roger Dean Stadium in Jupiter, Florida. This marks the seventh season that the Cardinals will call Jupiter home to their spring games. The spring training season lasts about a month, and it will give the Cardinals a final opportunity to gel as a team before the start of the regular season. It also provides newly acquired players the chance to adjust to new surroundings and fine-tune their talents before the season commences.

The Cardinals will play around 35 games throughout the duration of spring training. These include games against NCAA university teams, triple AAA professional teams and other Major League Baseball teams. They will play the majority of the games against other competing MLB teams in the competitive Grapefruit League.

The Grapefruit League is a spring training division including teams from

both the National and American leagues. St. Louis will play teams such as Los Angeles, Boston and the New York Mets, among others. It should provide a competitive outlet for the Cardinals to iron out all their kinks before the start of the regular season.

The Cardinals will indeed have some new faces around the clubhouse this year. In the off-season, St. Louis fans witnessed the departure of some of their favorite players and the arrival of new talent in their absence. Familiar faces such as J.D. Drew, Tino Martinez, and Fernando Vina all parted ways with the Cardinals. The Cardinals welcomed new arrivals such as Jeff Suppan, Reggie Sanders, Ray King, Jason Marquis, Marlon Anderson and Brent Butler to the team.

The main question of concern for the Cardinals as they head into opening day is whether or not their starting pitching will hold up. The ineffectiveness of their starting rotation in the 2003 campaign led to a third-place finish for the Cardinals in the National League Central Division. If the Cardinals hope to place any better in

2004, some unproven newcomers to their starting pitching rotation will be required to have solid seasons.

Matt Morris and Woody Williams are projected to fill the one and two spots in the starting five rotations, respectively. Morris and Williams should provide the Cardinals with veteran leadership and steady performances. The uncertainties in the pitching department fall with the three, four and five starters. Chris Carpenter, the projected number three, and Jason Marquis, probable number five, combined for zero wins during the 2003 season. Carpenter missed the season due to shoulder injury, and Marquis pitched a disappointing season for the Atlanta Braves.

Jeff Suppan, expected to fill the role as the number four starter, ended his 2003 campaign with a mediocre 13-11 record, throwing for both Pittsburgh and Boston. If the Cardinals are to have a chance at the post-season in 2004, they will need big seasons from some unproven starting pitchers.

The Cardinals offense in 2004 should help mediate some concerns surrounding their starting pitching. St.

Louis recently secured Albert Pujols for years to come with a seven-year, one hundred million-dollar contract. Pujols will be returning with the likes of Jim Edmonds, Scott Rolen and Edgar Renteria. These four should form the core of the Cardinal's offensive lineup. The departure of Drew, Martinez and Vina in the off-season will leave a gap in the lineup for a short period; however, newcomers such as Anderson, Sanders, Vaughn and Lankford should quickly fill this gap. The Cardinals have possessed one of the most potent offenses in the National League over the last few seasons, and the lineup for the 2004 season should prove no different.

The Cardinals have also gone to great lengths to strengthen their bullpen for 2004. They fortified the left side of the bullpen by adding Ray King from the Braves in the off-season. King will be coupled with Steve Kline as the two main left-handed setup pitchers. St. Louis is counting on Julian Tavarez to fill the role of the right-handed setup man.

see **CARDINALS**, page 14

HOCKEY, from page 10

Brad Warlick, team member, commented on the surprisingly disappointing season.

"We didn't even have a coach at the beginning of the season. Key injuries to some of our best players really hurt us on the ice. We turned from a serious team with a good reputation into a team who was suddenly short handed for every game. We had the heart and desire to win every game, but with the amount of injuries that our team suffered, we just couldn't recover in time," Warlick said.

Although the team did have many downs to its season, there were a few bright spots to build on. It had a key 4-3 OT win this year versus Northern

FINAL FOUR, from page 10

Illinois University, who eventually finished second in the national tournament.

"We could have easily given up, very easily because things really didn't go our way, but we stuck with it and at times proved that we could still compete with the best teams out there even when we were short-handed," Warlick said.


The hockey team's season begins this October and runs through early January. Although the team has some key players graduating from the team, their youth and great integrity are going to need to be looked upon to make another impact season on the league.

Aside from most of the big teams, there are usually a few teams such as Georgia Tech, Michigan State, South Carolina, Charlotte, SIU-Carbondale and Oklahoma State that have a few big wins on the year but also have a few key losses which leaves no one really knowing what to think of them.

So here is the big question of the season: who will play the Cinderella team in this season's big dance? Some possible teams such as Manhattan, Utah State, Kent State and even little old Troy State are just to name a few.


Anything goes come tournament time every year. Do you think that you have what it takes to pick the winner's bracket this time around? Let us wait and find out as the nation's biggest basketball tournament is ready to start with a bang only weeks from now.

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TEAM TRIVIA

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Mail to-
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8001 Natural Bridge Road
St. Louis, MO 63135



EDITOR

CASEY SCHACHER
A&E Editor

phone: 516-5174
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A&E Calendar

Movies

*Film openings are subject to change.

Week of March 1

Against the Ropes- A true story about a female manager (Meg Ryan) who challenges the male-dominated world of boxing by managing a street punk-turned-professional fighter, Luther Shaw (Omar Epps). Rated PG-13. Opens Feb. 20th.

Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen- Two teenage girls battle for lead in the school play in this comedy about high-school, fashion and popularity. Rated PG. Opens Feb. 20th.

The Passion of the Christ- Jim Caviezel stars in this Mel Gibson directed film about the last hours of Jesus Christ. The pre-release controversy surrounding this movie ensures that it will be a massive hit, but will the controversy (surrounding violence and possible anti-semitic sentiments) have been swirling around the film for weeks.

OSCAR PREVIEW

LOTR should dominate Oscars

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
Music Critic

This story is caught in a time trap. Because of the paper's deadline, I have to write my Oscar story before I see the Academy Awards presentations on Sunday, Feb. 29. However, by the time you read this, the award show will have taken place and the Oscars will have been handed out. Making predictions about Oscar winners is especially dicey under such circumstances.

The truth is, I am not particularly skilled at predicting the Oscars and unless one is a Hollywood insider, no one else is either. It should not come as a surprise to anyone that, while I feel I am a good judge of film and knowledgeable about film technique and history, I am not actually a Hollywood insider. The Hollywood insider edge is needed because winning an Oscar is not necessarily about the best films and the best performances but about who is whose friend, which film made the most money, who was overlooked last year and so forth.

A certain number of the Oscars are given as consolation prizes for a film overlooked in another category, to add to a hit film's pile of Oscars, as a kind of de facto lifetime achievement prize for the perpetually overlooked or simply because the nominee is well liked in the film community. Making a successful prediction depends on lots of insider information. If it really were about the best films of the year, Oscar winners would look more like those top-ten lists film critics issue at the end of a year, lists that often have considerable agreement from a variety of viewpoints.

Oscars add value to a film, boosting ticket sales for those still in theaters and then adding additional sales for those films that have gone to video and DVD, so their value goes beyond just the honor. Earning an Oscar adds a lot to the prestige and sales of a film and to the negotiating power of the actors, directors and creative people who win. Still, some films are given Oscars simply because they deserve them, which also throws a wrench in the works if you were trying to calculate winners based solely on finances.

So this is tricky stuff, but still one is compelled to try. Like many critics, I like to give my guess on the winner and give my pick for who should win. And the contests are not all the same either. Some are easy to guess while others are nearly impossible. No matter how good one might be at guessing, there are always surprises. The nominees often tell you more about which are the best films of the year than who actually wins but this year the nominees are particularly odd. This may be because, while it has been a banner year for documentaries, and there have been some outstanding independent films, the mainstream films have mostly been flawed or lackluster.

The same cannot be said for acting in these mainstream films, where there have been a number of outstanding performances that far exceeded the quality of the film itself. Several significant indie films ("The Station Agent" and "American Splendor" quickly spring to mind) were overlooked for deserved Oscars, especially in the Best Picture category, but we will limit the Oscar picks to nominated films for each category.

In some categories, you can make a reasonable guess, in others a possible guess and for the remainder, the answer is "who knows?" Let us rank these by number: 1 for likely winners, 2 for more uncertain, and 3 for the hardest ones to guess.

So here are my picks for the nominated films in major categories that should win the Oscar and a guess at which way the Academy wind will blow. To see the nominees and the winners, go to www.oscar.com.

Best Picture:
Difficulty level: 2
Should win: "Lord of the Rings"
Likely to win: "Lord of the Rings"
Last chance to honor the remarkable series.

Best Director:
Difficulty level: 2
Should win: Peter Jackson, "Lord of the Rings"
Likely to win: Peter Jackson, "Lord of the Rings"
This should always agree with the above.



Orlando Bloom (left) and Viggo Mortenson (right) star as Legolas the Elf and Aragorn, the true king of Gondor, in THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING. Peter Jackson directed this movie, which is expected to win multiple Oscars.

Best Actor:
Difficulty level: 3
Should win: Bill Murray, "Lost in Translation"
Likely to win: Sean Penn, "Mystic River"
Johnny Depp finally gets a nomination, but he lives in France. Penn's performance is great but there is a chance it will go to Murray for the best performance of his career.

Best Actress:
Difficulty level: 1
Should win: Charlize Theron, "Monster"
Likely to win: Charlize Theron, "Monster"
This one is obvious.

Best Supporting Actor:
Difficulty level: 2
Should win: Alec Baldwin, "The Cooler"
Likely to win: Tim Robbins,

"Mystic River"
Alec Baldwin gives the best performance of his career, but Robbins is likely to win for a movie whose performances exceed the film itself; then again, Robbins is political and that might be a problem for an acceptance speech.

Best Supporting Actress:
Difficulty level: 2
Should win: Shohreh Aghdasioo, "House of Sand and Fog"
Likely to win: Shohreh Aghdasioo, "House of Sand and Fog"
If Keisha Castle-Hughes were nominated here instead of in Best Actress, she would win. It is harder to guess among the nominees but Aghdasioo has the edge.

Best Documentary:
Difficulty level: 1
Should win: "Fog of War"
Likely to win: Fog of War

Even in a year of outstanding documentaries, it is the all-round favorite to win.

Best Foreign Film:
Difficulty level: 2
Should win: "Barbarian Invasions"
Likely to win: "Barbarian Invasions"

Several other worthy foreign films ("Triplets of Belleville," "Dirty Pretty Things") were not nominated.

Best Animated Film:
Difficulty level: 1
Should win: "Triplets of Belleville"
Likely to win: "Finding Nemo"
"Nemo" is wonderful entertainment, but "Triplets" is far more original and innovative.

see OSCARS, page 13

MOVIE REVIEW

'Passion' ruined by violence, anti-Semitic undertones

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
Science Columnist

The first thing you should know about Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" is this: Do not take children to see this film.

Gibson directed and produced "The Passion of the Christ," his own funds financing it after several studios turned him down. It uses the Gospels, especially Matthew, as the basis for a graphically realistic film about the suffering and torment of the last hours of Christ's life. Dialogue is in Latin and Aramaic, the common languages of the area at that time, with English subtitles. It stars James Caviezel as Jesus, Maia Morgenstern as Mary, Monica Bellucci as Mary Magdalene and Francesco de Vito as Peter.

Hollywood does too few movies with serious themes. The idea of doing

a big budget film about the Easter story is a fine idea, regardless of what one's personal religious beliefs might be. It has been many years since Hollywood attempted a high gloss, polished movie about a central story of Christianity. Religious or not, one was inclined to applaud Gibson for making a film that the moneyed nay-sayers of Hollywood may have deemed "not commercial enough," a film about a subject that many people will enjoy.

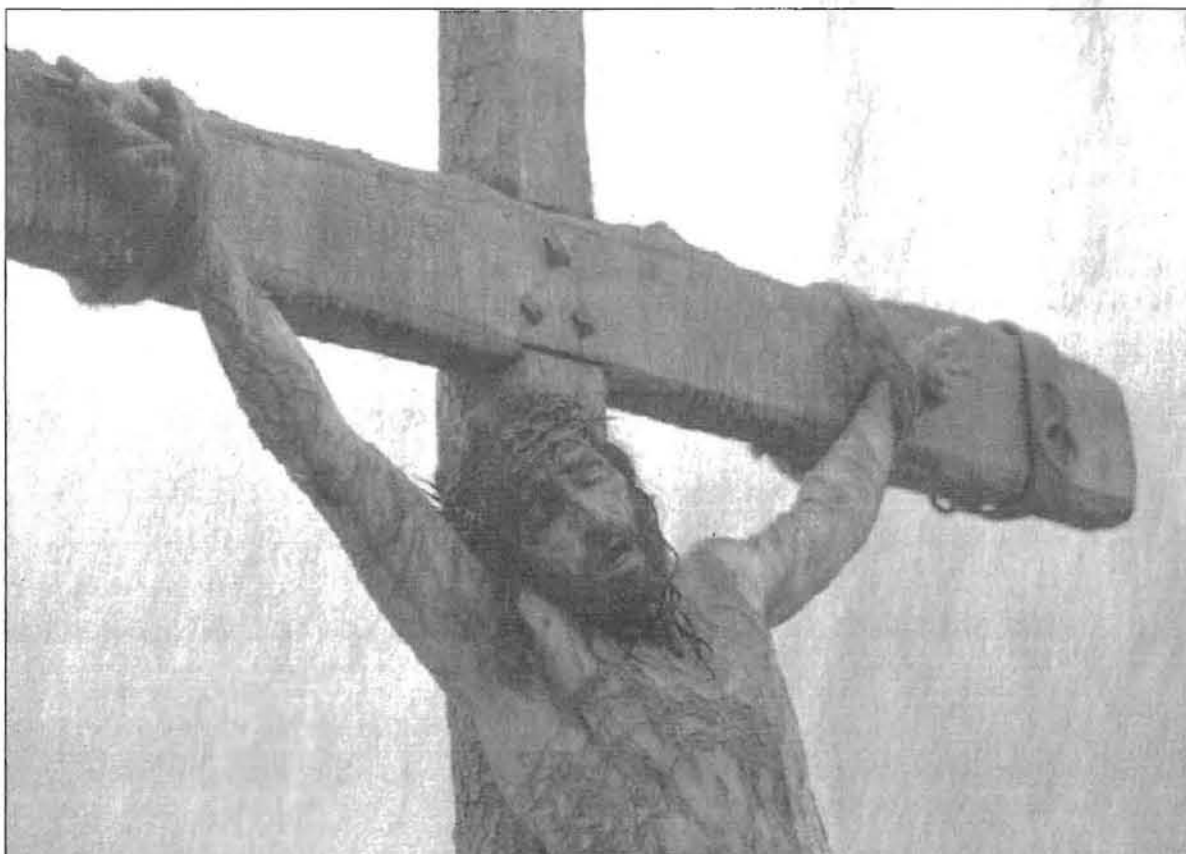
Sure, big budget movies are a business, but a little art and substance occasionally is a good thing. Separation of church and state does not mean separation of church and commerce, and it would seem there are plenty of people eager to embrace a film on this subject.

However, instead of making the expected story of the Last Supper, Crucifixion and Resurrection, with its cycle from light to darkness and back to divine light, Gibson choose to focus

only on the violent aspects of the whole story. Rather than Christ's message, Gibson gives us the agony of Christ's ordeal in the most gruesome, realistic and graphic manner possible. When Christ is arrested in the garden, he is beaten so that his eye swells shut. When he is brought before the Jewish leaders, he is savagely beaten again. The scourging sends blood flying as flesh is ripped from his body. This is not cartoon violence but savagely realistic abuse, the kind of human suffering that will leave the audience trembling with horror. A more apt name for the film would be "The Agony of the Christ."

The film is agonizing for the entire audience, not just the sensitive and soft-hearted. The Last Supper appears only in some flashbacks, along with snippets of Jesus' teachings. There is a brief scene for the Resurrection at the end.

see PASSION, page 9



Jim Caviezel stars as Jesus Christ in Mel Gibson's extremely controversial film "The Passion of the Christ."

Racanelli's makes for good Italian fare at reasonable price

BY MONICA MARTEN
Staff Writer

Racanelli's sits quietly in the Central West End, serving pizza and other yummy bits of Italian cuisine.

Melissa Schmitz, a medical assistant and expert on good food, and I arrived on Friday at 6:45. For the dinner rush, Racanelli's was not that busy. We did not have to wait long to order or to receive our food. Our only interaction with the employees was when we placed our orders.

Still, Racanelli's had great service. The cashier was polite and even laughed at my jokes. The uniform appeared to be a white shirt, a red hat and dress pants. After placing our orders, Melissa and I sat down at one of the tables. A TV sat above the door, while another hung in a corner of the restaurant. Both showed Mad TV on Comedy Central, which sparked a discussion between Melissa and me as to which show was better, Mad TV or Saturday Night Live.

There were several different foods on the menu. Four types of pizzas sat in a display case. After debating for a couple of minutes, I finally ordered two slices of pepperoni and sausage pizza (\$3.00 ea.) and a medium Sprite (\$1.25). Melissa ordered a pepperoni and sausage stromboli (\$6.00).

After a wait of less than five minutes, the food arrived. This thrilled us because we were hungry. The pizza slices were huge, but only lukewarm. Melissa liked her stromboli. "It was good," she said. "It was nice and hot, but not too hot."

In between eating and watching TV, I checked out the look of the restaurant. Racanelli's may have been a small restaurant, but it advertised itself with neon signs that hung in the window. When we first walked in, a mural on the opposite wall greeted us. The scene depicted the New York skyline, complete with the twin towers and the Statue of Liberty holding a pizza slice. The menu hung above the register, brightly lit with somewhat small print.

The register faced the window. Tables, chairs and booths dotted the clean floor. Bright lights lit up the dining area, but the kitchen seemed to be dim.

Although there were several different foods to choose from, Racanelli's offered a small selection. They had full-sized pizzas, pizza slices, salads, stromboli, soda and tea. Although tips are not expected, they are accepted.

Despite the friendly service, the atmosphere was rather cold and unwelcoming. We felt as if we were walking into a place where we did not belong. Only two other people were in the restaurant besides us. A delivery guy came in only to leave on a run moments later. Occasionally, a customer would come in to place an order and either leave or wait for his or her order. Though Melissa and I could have stayed longer to chitchat, we left quickly after eating. We really did not see any reason to stay longer than necessary. We both agree the food was good, although my pizza could have been a little warmer.

For a quick bite without much interference from others, head over to Racanelli's.

Racanelli's Pizza

- 1 slice of pepperoni: -\$3.00
- 1 slice of sausage -\$3.00
- 1 pepperoni and sausage stromboli -\$3.00
- Soft drink \$1.25

Look, an arch!

St. Louis a large factor in Daniel Stolar's book

BY PAUL CRUTCHER
Staff Writer

There is only so much a writer can do to draw in his or her readers. A writer can describe the foliage, the broken concrete pathway, the chatter of chipmunks, the icy breeze, the stinging aroma of burnt wood pouring from the tops of houses and on and on, but the reader may not get the image intended.

What happens when readers cannot get the picture at all? Perhaps you have not sucked in the poison from the fireplace or encountered a chipmunk. Ever read a book set in London, Paris, Moscow, Tokyo or New York? Have you ever, when reading those books, not been able to frame the picture? Imagine swiftly moving through a story filled with haphazard, anonymous buildings that probably look nothing like the alleyways in downtown Tokyo.

Sure, you have experienced this. Something is inevitably lost in the conveying of a story if we cannot imagine the setting for ourselves. What would we give for a book filled with stories clearly set in good ol' St. Louis?

When I picked up Daniel Stolar's "The Middle of the Night" from the rack, I asked myself that question. After all, one look at the night view of the St. Louis riverfront on the cover would make anyone familiar with that silvery metal contraption (and what lies west of it). So, I took note and hoped that what Stolar put inside justifies the trouble of picking him up in the first place. Clearly, I expected to get stories that came in high-definition, because I am a St. Louis native.

"Middle of the Night" is a collection of eight stories from Stolar. For the most part, he stays in St. Louis or gets a link into St. Louis, but his people also

venture to places like Kansas City, which is still under the neat I-know-that-place high-definition setting. Two or three times, however, we are ushered up to meet some people in New England. For their entire heritage, sparkling lakes, grand woods, universities and famous cities, I could not have cared less.

Last time I checked, there is not an Arch in Boston. Maybe, I began to speculate, Stolar's cover only depicted the riverfront on his books sold here. As it turns out, even copies sold in New York City have a picture of our arch on the cover.

I should say a bit about the nature of the stories, which is not surprising. Stolar is well outside science fiction. One of the grandest dramatic moments is when a seventy-year-old dad is teaching his sixteen-year-old son how to

drive by flying rally-style, tires squealing, 3-4 shifting, around a lonely section of Forest Park. The stories involve the intimate lives of people, families primarily.

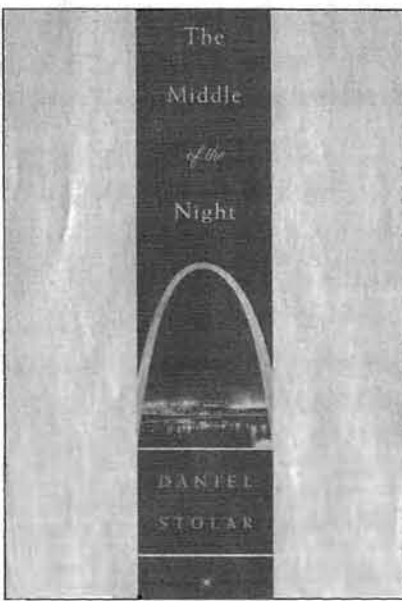
Stolar likes to dwell on the sensations people feel about love, love lost and almost-love. Families grapple with divorce, infidelity and accidents. Adults recount the trials and joys of growing up, maturing and coming

ing to be big people. A woodworker obsesses about perfection in his creations. This white kid listens to what was Magic108 and joins a traditionally black fraternity.

Two longtime friends at a high school reunion find sparks again that trigger fond, romantic memories.

This is fun stuff, if you are interested in grappling with normal human issues, sometimes darkly. Stolar gets into present tense a whole lot, which may be distracting, depending on personal preferences.

see ST. LOUIS, page 14



"The Middle of the Night"

PASSION, from page 12

Gibson's film has all the gut-wrenching intensity of "Black Hawk Down," the opening scene of "Saving Private Ryan" and the final scene of Gibson's own "Braveheart." However, instead of being a brief sequence, this is two hours-plus of the most horrific, visceral stuff, virtually without a break. If there were a film that should earn a NC-17 for violence, this would be a top candidate.

Surely, this is not what families flocking to the theater are expecting to see. Unlike the other recent religious-themed film about Martin Luther, which had good intentions but poor execution, "The Passion of the Christ" is skillful filmmaking but a disturbing creation. The buckets-of-blood approach buries any inspiring message the film could have offered. The film is moving and emotional—how could watching this torment not be?—and the already faithful may find it stirring to watch, but it does little to convey the ideas of Christianity and is unlikely to inspire someone toward religious faith.

The problem with this film is not the subject but Gibson's choices as a filmmaker. Gibson is a skillful filmmaker, who co-wrote the script as well as served as director. The film is beautifully photographed, with wonderful acting, careful attention to detail in costumes and sets, skillful editing and breathtaking special effects involving demons and devils. James Caviezel as

Jesus does an outstanding job in an emotionally and physically demanding role. Other fine performances stud the film.

In every technical aspect, the film is first-rate. However, it is hard to know exactly what Gibson's intentions were in his decision to focus only on the most physically painful aspects of the whole story and to give short shrift to the Resurrection and Jesus' message of love and forgiveness. There is some reference to Jesus' teaching of love and forgiveness but it only comes near the end, after many scenes of abuse at the hands of the Romans and the Jewish leaders. Satan, played by Rosalinda Celentano as something from a horror movie, figures prominently but there is little reference to God. Is this what Gibson sees as the message of Christianity? Shouldn't a film about this aspect of the Christian religion be inspiring and uplifting?

That brings us around to another problem with this piece of filmmaking. It has a lingering whiff of anti-Semitism. Certainly, it gives some blame to the Romans but, while individual Roman guards are the cruelest in the film and individual Jews are shown in acts of kindness, overall the film seems to lay the most "blame" on Jewish leaders.

Gibson himself has said this film is not a historic recreation but a film version of the Gospels. He has chosen

Matthew, the Gospel most often interpreted as anti-Semitic. He does include some historic information to justify Pontius Pilate's (Hristo Shopov) actions but no such historic context is accorded the actions of Caiaphas (Mattia Sbragia) and the other Jewish leaders, who remain one-dimensional figures. Were they not faced with several would-be prophets around this time, who also claimed to be the Messiah? I am not a Biblical scholar but surely there is more context to these events than Gibson chose to present. Why give context for one actor in this drama but not others?

The problem with this selective finger-pointing is the history of such blame. Blame the Romans and no one lashes out at modern Italians, but history is full of instances of using this interpretation of the Gospels against Jewish people. Worst of all, while an adult might be able to see that blame should be placed on the historic individuals involved and not their descendants, will the unfortunate children who are traumatized by seeing this film come away thinking that "the Jews did this"? Let us hope not, but the many reports of families taking children to see this film most inappropriate for them are not encouraging.

It is easy for people to think of movies as just mindless entertainment but film really is an art form and, like all art, it is powerful stuff. It speaks about

the intentions of its creators, even if it only through the product placements tell you what to buy. What are we make of Gibson's intentions with the film? Gibson has been quoted as saying the film has a message of peace, but it undetectable in what he puts on the screen.

For any controversial film, I usually recommend that people see the film to judge for themselves. "The Passion of the Christ" comes with an extra caution that it is not for children or the sensitive. For this film, I have to break my own rule and recommend that you not give Gibson your money. The issue is not the quality of the film but the content.

Sometimes you have a film about a wonderful subject that, sadly, fails as a piece of film. You can also have a remarkable film, even a work of genius which has objectionable content. Len Reifenstahl's films are beautiful but she is the creator of the propaganda film and was a Nazi. "Birth of a Nation" is a groundbreaking film but the content is racist. Gibson's film is neither as groundbreaking nor as offensive as either of those films. The point is that style and substance are different. Although some leaders of the Christian right are heavily promoting it, other religious leaders are less enthusiastic. The Jewish Anti-Defamation League finds it objectionable, with good reason. I feel. Go see it if you must, but this is a film that it would not hurt to miss.

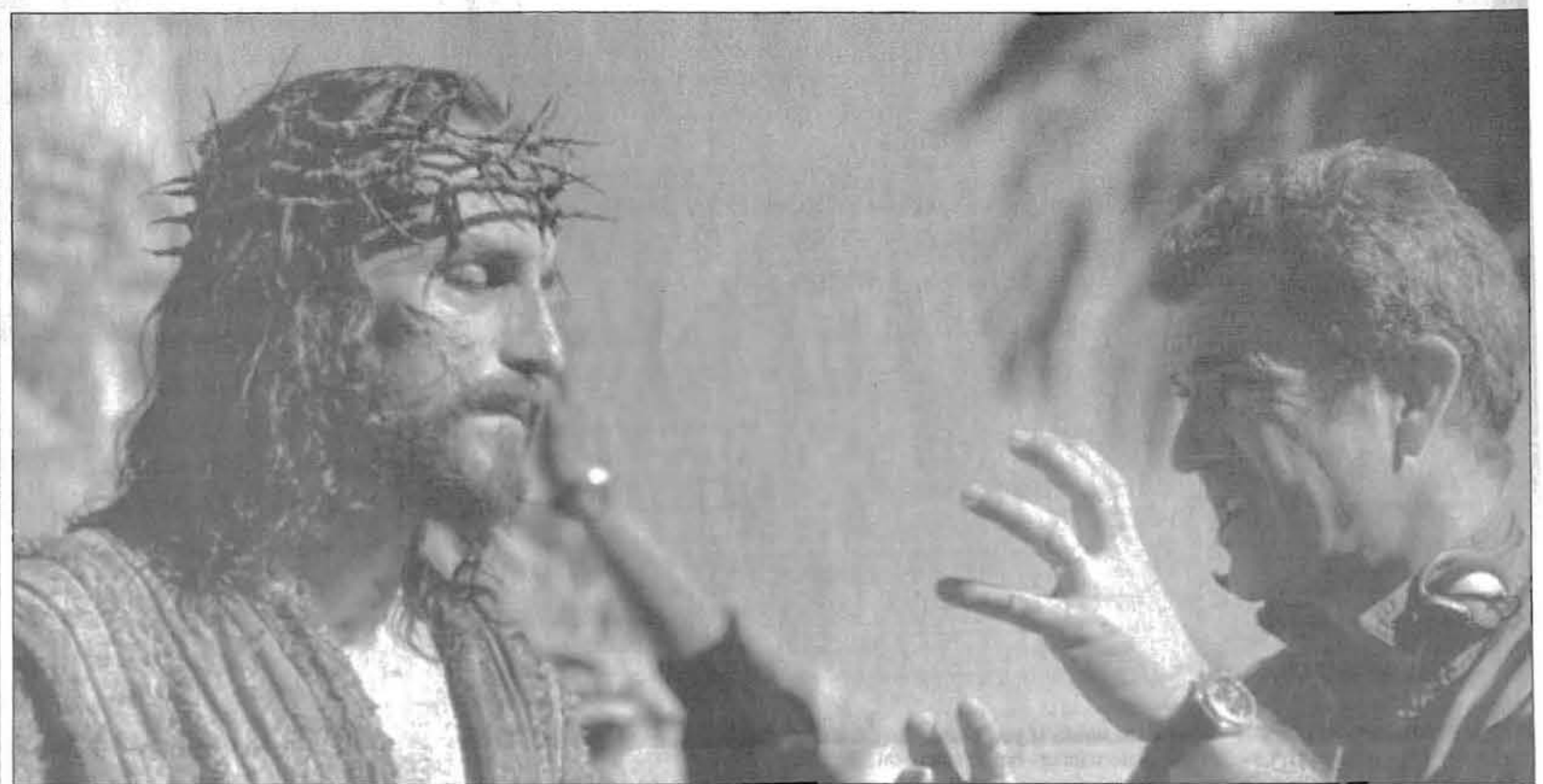


Photo courtesy rottentomatoes.com

Jim Caviezel (left) discusses a scene with Mel Gibson. Gibson directed THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST and Caviezel stars as Jesus.

Stellastar* is simply stellar

BY LAURA HEPBURN
Music Critic

This is the story of how I became a stellastar* fan. One day, upon checking my mailbox, I discovered a plain brown package from RCA Records. Within that plain brown package, I found one of the best CDs I have heard in a year—yes, a year. Upon listening to the self-titled stellastar* album, I was entertained with flashbacks to my childhood and the popular music of the time. Stellastar* could be described as a combination of The Pixies' rock-out style, The Cure's mesmerizing vocals and The Talking Heads' catchy popness. Does this combination sound too good to be true? Believe it. Stellastar* takes the best of '80s sound and modernizes it for today's audiences. Anyone who grew up in the '80s will appreciate this incredible merging of then and now.

Stellastar* is made up of four artists who consider themselves actors, artists, designers and filmmakers before considering themselves musi-

cians. In fact, the first three members (lyricist/singer/guitarist Shawn Christensen, bassist/vocals Amanda Tannen, drummer Arthur Kremer) met each other while attending the Pratt Institute of the Arts in Brooklyn. These three artists began playing together when the most experience any of them had was six months.

In the spring of 2000, they met after graduation and began to revisit their musical past together. With an understanding of what they wanted to accomplish, they began to realize they might need a little something extra to give their music the desired zest. Then, fate stepped in. While checking for lagging mail at his old apartment, Kremer discovered that the new inhabitant was guitarist Michael Jurin. Jurin had recently moved to New York after leaving behind Charlotte's Funeral. Kremer invited Jurin to meet Christensen and Tannen, and with fresh new guitar sensibilities, stellastar* was born.

Stellastar* has the rare ability to be

catchy while continuing to have a unique style. Christensen captures the spirit of Cure vocalist Robert Smith without trying to be a cheap reproduction that would offend Cure fans (myself included). Meanwhile, Tannen plays the bass while crooning backup vocals in pure Pixies style. The guitars rock enough to give it energy but not so much as to take away from tunes reminiscent of '80s pop. Fortunately for music lovers everywhere, stellastar* manages to achieve the energetic greatness of the '80s without the cheesiness that would turn away modern listeners.

I deeply enjoyed every track on stellastar*'s self-titled album, but among my favorites were "A Million Reasons" and "My Coco." "A Million Reasons" uses guitar techniques that sound tropical, making the listener feel even more at ease to enjoy the music. It has a wonderfully mellow, happy vibe while retaining the high energy that enhances the whole album.

see STELLASTAR*, page 14

Student Government Association

2004-2005 Elections

Applications are now being accepted for the following elected Student Government Association positions:

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Pick up the Application for Candidacy from the front desk in the Office of Student Life. It must be submitted to the Office of Student Life by Friday, March 5, 5pm. No late applications will be accepted. Contact Jeff Griesemer, election committee chair, at jdg222@studentmail.umsl.edu for more info

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IN THEATERS FRIDAY, MARCH 19TH

STELLASTAR*, from page 13

"My Coco" has a soft introduction that leads into one of the catchiest tracks on the CD: a toe-tapping, head-bobbing good mood song. This album has elements from the best 80s music while somehow managing to make it even more applicable to modern music fans.

While stellastar* has yet to take over mainstream audiences, they are

not overlooked. Spin magazine, Rolling Stone, Vanity Fair, The New Yorker and Stuff magazine have all had rave reviews for this new and exciting band. I fail to understand how a band with this much talent, vision and positive publicity has been unable to become the next big thing. Looking back on the career story of popular band The Strokes, I

would say people should expect to see and hear a lot more about stellastar*.

In fact, I have a little tip for Current readers. Mark your calendars to see stellastar* at The Gargoyle on April 17. This will be one of best shows available to St. Louis residents for a minimal price (\$10). You do not want to miss this concert.

St. Louis, from page 13

The stories that are set in or around St. Louis should pay off, however, even if Stolar ventures away occasionally.

His collection of stories, which, yes, in case you were wondering, does include one entitled "Middle of the

Night," runs \$16.10 from Amazon.com (and you get free shipping if you buy \$25 in books, jazz or flicks).

CARDINALS, from page 11

A healthy Jason Isringhausen in the closing spot should give the Cardinals an advantage in close, late inning games from the very beginning of the season.

Preseason critics have picked the Cardinals to finish third in the National League Central Division, behind Chicago and Houston. Chicago and Houston have been active in acquiring new players in the off-season, mainly starting pitchers. Chicago picked up veteran Greg Maddux from the Braves, and Houston picked up Roger Clemens and Andy Pettite from the Yankees. The Cardinals offense will no doubt face some tough starting pitching within their division in 2004.

Despite the fact that the Cardinals

are picked to finish third in their division and miss the playoffs, many UM-St. Louis students remain optimistic that their team will defeat the odds in 2004. Steven Nitty, senior, business major says,

"The season hasn't even started yet. The Cards are never out of it because they are so good on both offense and defense."

Nathan Myrick, sophomore, undecided major, stated,

"St. Louis is the perennial contender to win the division. The other teams will have to come through them to win it, and I'll be pulling for them every step of the way."

The Cardinals are excited about the 2004 season and have set high goals for success. They are using the 2003 World Series Champion Florida Marlins as an example to negate the accuracy of preseason predictions. Nobody picked the Marlins to win their own division, much less the World Series.

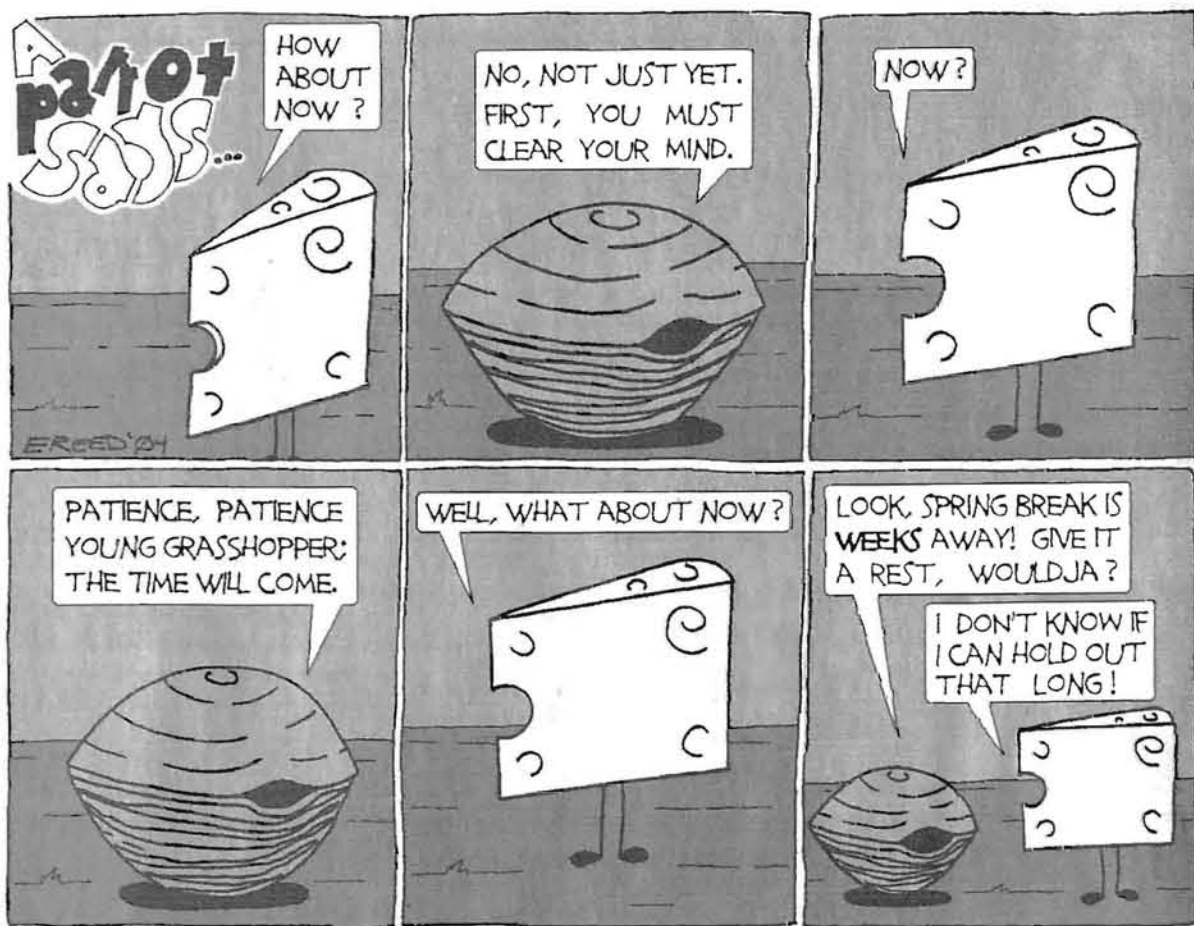
Not one minute of regular season baseball has been played so far this year, but the Cardinals are looking good on paper. The National League Central Division is up for grabs, and St. Louis will be more than a mere bump in the road for Houston and Chicago. St. Louis opens the 2004 season with a home game on April 5 against the Milwaukee Brewers; this should be the kick off to an exciting year.

S. African professor discusses changes in homeland

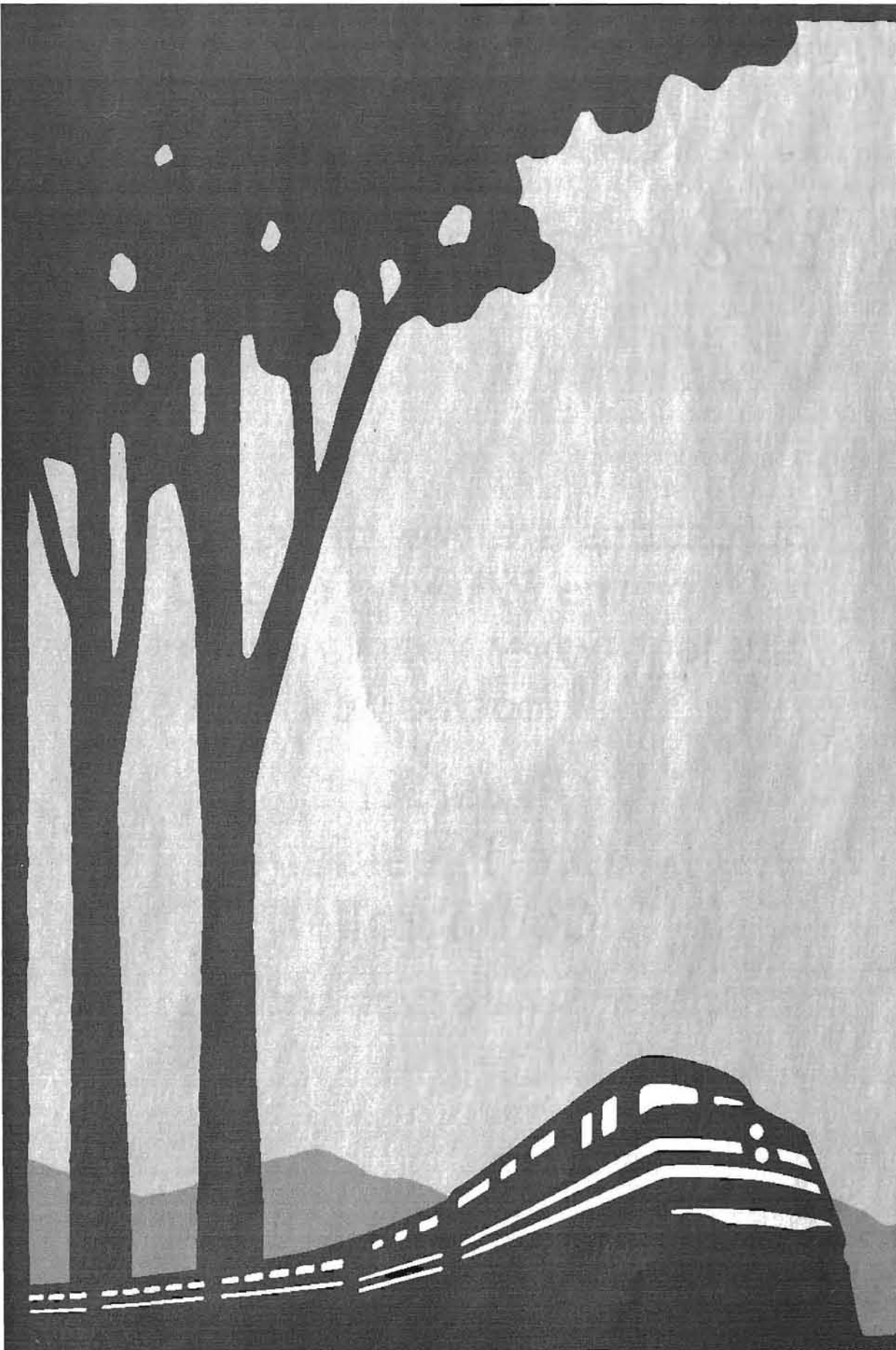


Mike Sherwin/The Current

Andre Odendaal, visiting professor of history at UM-St. Louis, spoke on "Robben Island and Public History in a changing South Africa" Wednesday afternoon in the Millennium Student Center. Odendaal directed the Robben Island Museum from 1996 to 2002. Robben Island was used as a prison island for political activists. Odendaal's lecture focused on the history and heritage of South Africa. The event was sponsored by the Center for International Studies.



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