

The Current

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4.7%

PHOTO BY JENNIFER MEAHAN

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The Current

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AFFILIATIONS



News

Tuition and fees to increase 4.7 percent for UMSL students

RYAN KRULL
 News Editor

University of Missouri-St. Louis students were handed a mixed bag last week when it was announced their tuition and other fees would be increasing 4.7 percent. However, these costs will be going up at all four campuses of the University of Missouri system and UM-St. Louis will be enjoying the most marginal of all the increases.

At 4.8 percent, the increase at University of Missouri-Kansas City will be the second lowest, followed by University of Missouri-Columbia with a 5.8 percent increase. Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla will bear the biggest increase at 6.6 percent.

The increases are the result of Governor Jay Nixon's two year tuition freeze coming to an end as well as his announcing a budget that includes a 7 percent cut in funding to the UM-System.

"We have to bear in mind that the tuition has been held flat for the past two years," Chancellor Thomas George said. "Is this good or bad? It depends on whom you ask. If you're scraping by to make ends meet this is pretty tough. From a mathematical standpoint though 4.7 divided by three is about the rate of

[inflation]." George said these increases will take effect this coming summer semester.

For some UM-System campuses though, the percentages ranging from 4.7 to 6.6 do not quite tell the whole story. For instance, nonresident students at Mizzou will see an increase of 6.2 percent due to differential fees. That is .4 percent higher than their in-state counterparts. Though the increase for UM-St. Louis students will be pretty much the same across the board, with the single exception of the Doctor of Optometry professional degree program. For that program the increase will be 5 percent for residents and 2.7 percent for nonresidents. "It's important to know that students did receive a decent deal with the tuition increases," Student Government Association President Dan Rosner said. "UMSL is still being forced to cut money out of our budget and the increase allows the cuts to not run as deep as they could have. Our supplemental fees were also some of the lowest in the system too."

It was announced at a November SGA meeting last year that UM-St. Louis was prepared to raise tuition by as much as 9 percent in the event of the state appropriations being cut by 15

percent. Around that same time numerous top UM-St. Louis administration officials said that the budget cuts coming down from Jefferson City could be as steep as 20 or 25 percent. However then UM-System President Gary Forsee was adamant that double digit tuition increases would be unacceptable. The relatively painless cut took many potential problems off the table. "The cut of 7 percent...will still mean that although there will be cuts on campus for next fiscal year, they will be much smaller than they could have been with larger cuts in state appropriations," Glen Cope, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, said. "We are still working on the budget for next year, so I don't yet have any specific information on programs that will or won't be cut. We'll begin working on proposals with the University Assembly Budget and Planning Committee in the next several months to determine where cuts and reallocations will be made."

Cope also made it clear that, because the increase is greater than inflation, it must be approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education and the state appropriation cuts must also be approved by the state legislature. University officials say that most likely both those things will happen.

“ The cut of 7 percent...will still mean that although there will be cuts on campus for next fiscal year, they will be much smaller than they could have been with larger cuts in state appropriations. ”

-Glen Cope

WEATHER

MON. 30	TUES. 33	WED. 35	THURS. 31	FRI. 23	SAT. 20	SUN. 24
29	28	26	17	12	7	13

SGA introduces tentative plans for a campus extension

Student survey offers a glimpse at new UMSL addition

DAVID VON NORDHEIM
Staff Writer

As last week's student survey hinted, the university campus may be in the midst of another expansion. The Student Government Association has introduced an initiative to construct a new, top-of-the-line recreation center, and it is counting on thorough student support and feedback to ensure the project delivers on all counts.

Curt Coonrod, the Vice Provost for Student Affairs, stated that the current push for a new recreation center is actually a renewal of an SGA proposition that emerged several years ago. "The current SGA is interested in gathering information regarding the level of interest our current student body has with regards to a fitness center," Coonrod said. "They developed a survey to gauge this support."

As the SGA is still in the process of receiving and evaluating student responses towards the project, any specific details about the construction remain tentative. If the interest is great enough to push the measure forward, however, students can expect a number of new developments and improvements to the university's workings.

SGA President Dan Rosner anticipates that the fitness center will function as a new gathering place for students,

increasing opportunities for campus involvement.

"It will show that the university is still slowly moving from a strictly commuter population to a population that stays on campus more, not just to go to class and go home," said Rosner. "This building will be the students' building, and having a second hub, the first being the MSC, will expand student space."

Campus expansion is one of the major priorities of the initiative, which seeks to create an entirely new stand-alone structure that will supplement existing campus facilities. Current facilities, such as the Mark Twain building, will remain open for student use, although this project seeks to correct aspects of the Mark Twain's accommodations that students have found problematic.

"The main issue with our current facilities is that the Mark Twain is where athletes train and compete, which lowers the usability by the general student population," stated Rosner. "There have also been concerns with the age of the equipment and the small amount of equipment the current facilities offer." The SGA hopes to address these concerns when designing the new facility, providing students with the utmost experience in campus recreation.

The facility could also play an integral role in bolstering the University of Missouri- St. Louis's student recruitment and public image. Universities

such as Mizzou often advertise their first-class fitness facilities as a means of enticing potential enrollees, and SGA Vice President Jericah Shelby hopes the proposed recreation center will have a similar effect at University of Missouri-St. Louis.

"Over the years the wellness and recreation centers on college campuses have begun to contribute to the overall appearance of universities," said Shelby. "I think this type of facility would help our campus attract more residential students and ultimately help the recruitment mission of the university."

For the initiative to proceed, however, the SGA still needs more student feedback and support, which can be provided through the online survey sent to all students' campus email addresses. Pending the results of the survey, the SGA will initiate a referendum to introduce a student recreation fee to take effect during the 2012 fall semester, providing the budget for the recreation center.

Likewise, the actual amenities of the recreation center will be determined wholly through student input, stressing the need for continued participation in the SGA survey. "This building will be built for UM-St. Louis and its students. While it will be a new center, there may not be the same amenities if the students do not want them," said Rosner.

The UNDERCURRENT

by Chenhao Li

"What would you buy our school mascot Louie for his birthday?"



"I would buy him a camera so we could see life behind the mascot."

Zakia Parris
Education
Sophomore



"Louie is pretty cute. I wanna see its interesting show."

Yuewei Chen
Business Administration
Graduate



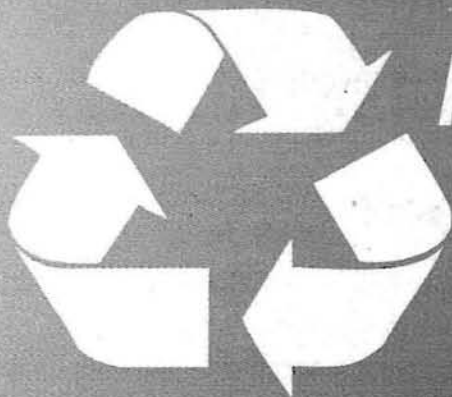
"In this snow time, I will buy him a big shovel."

Darmawan
Public Policy Administration
Graduate

Letter to the Editor

The change from Chartwells to Sodexo doesn't seem to have led to any changes in the quality of food, yet. However, there is one significant change that I feel warrants mention and attention. Chartwells made use of paper-cardboard plates and boxes at the Nosh. Sodexo uses Styrofoam, and not just any Styrofoam but #6 Styrofoam which is the hardest to recycle. This is incredibly environmentally unfriendly and I feel that Sodexo should be asked to change back to the use of the recyclable boxes and plates that had been used in previous years. This likely isn't what most students care about when it comes to getting their lunch, but I still feel it is an important issue. UMSL's recycling bins are an acknowledgment of environmental issues by the campus and I feel that this same acknowledgement should be made among businesses that would operate on campus.

-Robert Domiano



**After all is read and done,
Please Recycle!**

-Your friends at the The Current

News Brief

Express Scripts' partnership honored with building's name change

MARY GRACE BUCKLEY

Staff Writer

The Computer Center Building is now named Express Scripts Hall in order to honor that company's partnership with the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The Fortune 200 company relocated its headquarters to the UM-St. Louis campus in 2007 and is the world's largest company headquartered on a university campus. Express Scripts Incorporated chose UM-St. Louis because it offered a choice of diverse, hard-working employees, on-site development and education of employees and connections to experts in field in-

cluding business logistics and information technology. Since then, the relationship has proved to be mutually beneficial as the university provides training and education for Express Scripts employees and the company in turn provides internships for students.

Express Scripts Chief Executive Officer and UM-St. Louis alumnus George Paz is also the chairman of the Gateway to Greatness fundraising campaign committee. The campaign committee currently aims to raise \$100 million by 2012, after which its goal will be raised to \$150 million.

On the other hand, in January, UM-St. Louis has begun to offer Express Scripts employees opportunities to earn bach-

elor's degrees in communications and business.

"Express Scripts is involved with the business school because it is a very [information technology]-driven company," Martin Leifeld, Vice Chancellor for Advancement, said. "The Computer Center Building will connect to a new business building, which is why the name is being changed."

He also said that the chancellor had to submit a letter to the curators requesting the change. The letter explains the UM-St. Louis—Express Scripts, Inc. partnership and its benefits. These include \$4 million that Express Scripts has donated to the university's programs. The change was approved and will be officially announced at a ceremony on February 25.



Over the break, the old Computer Center Building got a brand-new name and shiny new letter graphics.

CHENHAO LI / THE CURRENT

Sports

Tritons fall to KY Wesleyan; suffer first home loss of season



Men's Basketball team playing against KY Wesleyan.

CEDRIC WILLIAMS / THE CURRENT

CEDRIC WILLIAMS

Sports Editor

The University of Missouri-St. Louis men's basketball team suffered one of its most disappointing losses of the season Friday night at the Mark Twain Building when visiting Great Lakes Valley Conference rival Kentucky Wesleyan blew open a close game in the second half to gain an important 76-61 victory.

Kentucky Wesleyan led from the opening basket and never trailed at any point during the game. UM-St. Louis tied the score only once, at 3-3. After that, the visiting Panthers pretty much controlled the action.

Four Kentucky Wesleyan players scored in double figures, with senior Cardell McFarland leading all scorers with 19 points. Teammates Marseilles Stewart (15), Anthony Young (14) and Chris Williams (10) also had big games for the Panthers.

Dominic Williams, junior, physical education, led the Tritons with 15 points, while teammates Justyn Watkins, junior,

communications; Gerald Fulton, junior, communications and Ryan Lawrence, senior, criminal justice, added 13, 10 and 10 points respectively.

UM-St. Louis, which trailed by as many as 11 points in the first half, cut its deficit to four points at halftime, when Zach Redel, junior, business, grabbed an offensive rebound and put it back in to make the score 36-32.

The Tritons seemed poised for a sure second-half comeback. But Kentucky Wesleyan opened the half with a 15-5 run that pushed its lead to 51-37.

UM-St. Louis never got closer than ten points after that, before finally succumbing by a 15-point deficit.

The loss dropped the Tritons to 14-7 on the season and 8-5 in GLVC play. UM-St. Louis remained in second place in the GLVC West Division, behind Drury University. But the Tritons did slip one more game behind, after Drury won its Friday night matchup against Indianapolis.

That sets up an ultra-important contest the next time out for the Tritons, who will host Drury at the Mark Twain, this Thursday, February 10.

UM-St. Louis needs to win that game if it is going to have

any chance at catching Drury and have a chance at winning the GLVC West Division crown.

Those stakes alone make Thursday's showdown the biggest of the season for the Tritons. But that night also happens to be the night the university will hold its annual Pack The Stands Night festivities at the Mark Twain.

Pack The Stands Night is an event co-sponsored by the athletic department and Student Life, in which the university invites all UM-St. Louis students, faculty, staff and alumni to "pack the stands" and show their support for Triton basketball.

The event was previously scheduled for the original date of Friday's game against Kentucky Wesleyan, Thursday, February 3, but was postponed after last week's severe snowstorm made traveling anywhere in the Midwest almost impossible.

But things might work out even better for the Tritons, who can expect a loud, raucous crowd on the night of what is going to be the biggest game of the season.

Drury is 16-5 and will come to town having won seven games in a row.

Triton women hang tough, but fall to KY Wesleyan

Mitchell pours in career-high 29, not enough against KWC

CEDRIC WILLIAMS
Sports Editor

The University of Missouri-St. Louis women's basketball teams suffered another stinging loss last Friday night when it hosted Kentucky Wesleyan at the Mark Twain Building.

The Tritons held the lead midway through the second half, but could not hold it, and lost to the Lady Panthers 84-77.

Shooting guard Kelly Mitchell, senior, communications, had one of the great shooting nights of her career for the Tritons. Mitchell connected on 10-of-13 shots, including seven-of-ten from three-point range, for a career-high 29 points to lead the Tritons.

During one particularly brilliant stretch of

play that included a stifling defensive effort by UM-St. Louis, Mitchell scored five points in less than ten seconds, when she banged in a three, then stole the ball and flipped in a layup that seemed to really fire up her teammates.

Kentucky Wesleyan led at that time 49-47 with 14 minutes left in the game. But less than two minutes later, Mitchell pulled the five-points-in-less-than-ten-seconds-trick again, banging in a three, then after a dynamic blocked shot by teammate Shayelle Dominguez, junior, business marketing, Mitchell put in another layup.

The second Mitchell quick strike attack, gave UM-St. Louis its first lead of the second half at 52-51, which the Tritons turned into a 58-53 lead on three straight lay-ups by Normeka Holder, junior, psychology.

That third bucket by Holder capped a 16-4 run by the Tritons that might have been the team's best stretch of basketball all season.

Unfortunately, Kentucky Wesleyan rallied. The Lady Panthers went on a ten-three run over the next four minutes to re-take the lead at 65-61.

Mitchell splashed in her seventh three of the night to make it 65-64, but that was as close as the Tritons would get, as Kentucky Wesleyan made six clutch free throws in the final minute to put the game away.

Dominguez, seeing her most extensive action of the season, put up career-highs with nine points and seven rebounds. Holder also had nine points and seven rebounds, while teammate Caitlyn Moody, junior, physical education, added 14 points for the Tritons,

who fell to 8-13 on the season.

UM-St. Louis' next contest will be Thursday's Pack The Stands Night game against Drury. That night, the university is inviting all UM-St. Louis students, faculty, staff and alumni to "pack the stands" and show their support for Triton basketball.

The Triton women will kickoff the festivities with a 5:30 p.m. game against the Panthers, which will be followed by a 7:30 p.m. men's game between UM-St. Louis and Drury.

The Triton women will close out the home portion of their schedule with their Senior Day game against rival Rockhurst University, next Saturday, February 12. Tipoff that day will be 1 p.m., followed by a men's game, which will tipoff at 3 p.m.



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Cedar Lake ballet dances on innovative edge at Touhill

THEATRE

A chance to see works by the choreographer who taught Emily Blunt ballet for her role in the upcoming film "Adjustment Bureau" brought out a full-house for the Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet at the Touhill Performing Arts Center's Anheuser-Busch Hall on Friday, January 28. Their reward was a performance of beauty and innovation.

The Oscar-nominated "Black Swan" has raised the public profile of ballet. That heightened interest has spotlighted Cedar Lake and its artistic director Benoit-Swan Pouffer. Dance St. Louis presented Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet in three performances at the Touhill PAC on Friday, January 28 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, January 29 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

There is nothing stuffy about Cedar Lake's take on the classic art of ballet. As Pouffer noted in a pre-performance talk, Cedar Lake seeks out innovative choreographers. The New York-based troupe was founded in 2003 by Wal-Mart heiress Nancy Laurie and named for a Columbia, Missouri street.

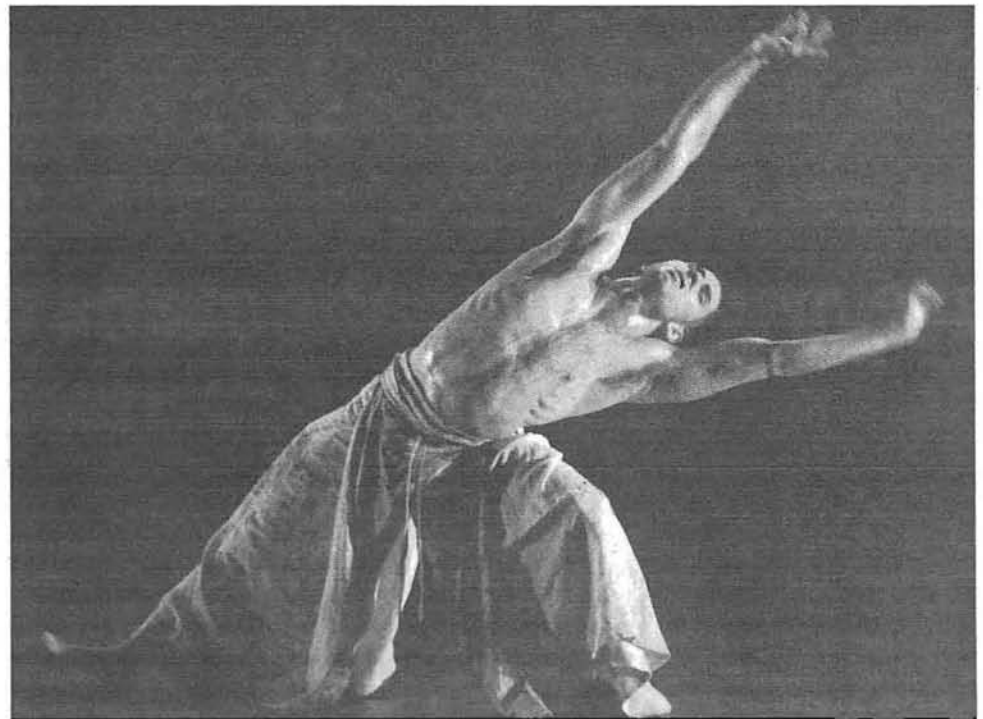
The evening featured three works by different choreographers, "Excerpts from Decadance 2007," "Ten Duets on a Theme of Rescue" and "Frame of View," with two intermissions. Each piece was remarkably creative,

breaking conventions of ballet while offering beauty and emotional fire.

Ohad Naharin's "Excerpts from Decadance 2007" took three segments from a longer work. The curtain rose on a bare stage and the whole 15-member troupe in a line, dressed in black and white. There was no music. At first, they stood still, and then began moving robotically in unison, advancing down stage and occasionally shouting. Suddenly, Middle Eastern-style music began and individual dancers broke out into frenetic movement in turns.

Next, a couple in medieval-inspired black doublets danced a seductive duet to strains of Vivaldi. The third segment featured five male dancers, bare-chested, in long, off-white skirts that evoked ancient Greece. They dipped hands into a bucket to paint themselves, before engaging in dances evoking wrestling, primitive rites or monks' rituals. Unexpectedly, a woman on stilts, dressed in red-and-black feathers and sequins, sauntered across the stage. After the men had gone, she reappears with a giant microphone to mime the words to a mambo song.

That head-spinning mix of humor and surprise, the mystical and romantic, is a sampling of the creative range of Cedar Lake. Yet every piece was seamlessly integrated, technically polished and emotionally gripping.



Oscar Ramos performs for the Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet on Friday and Saturday at the Touhill.

COURTESY OF PAUL B. GOODE

Crystal Pite's "Ten Duets on a Theme of Rescue" used surreal music from the film "Solaris," setting a brooding tone. Dancers Ana-Marie Lucaciu and Ebony Williams joined Nickemil Concepcion, Jon Bond and Jubal Battisti on Friday night with different dancers at other performances.

Also shunning scenery, the piece featured dancers in street clothes-type costumes. They entered in pairs, but rarely in couples. Pairs danced together, formed couples, switched partners, fought or embraced as dancers came and went on stage. One particularly affecting piece featured one woman strolling across the stage as a man ran frantically in place, trying to catch up with her, in a striking visual metaphor.

Didy Veldman's "Frame of View" featured

eight dancers, and a set like the outline of a room with three free-standing doors. Each dancer wore distinctive, colorful costumes, including a wildly plaid suit and a very stretchy turtleneck. Music varied from contemporary instrumental to emotionally-sung ballads as dancers played out a number of scenarios.

In one segment, a lone woman dances her sorrow to a song about a deserting lover, sobbing at a table and occasionally speaking nonsensically. A comic highlight was a slow-motion quarrel between lovers, done with wonderfully exaggerated expressions.

The performance ended with thunderous applause and two curtain calls for an amazing evening.

A -Cate Marquis

The Decemberists find their American roots

MUSIC

On January 18, The Decemberists released a one of a kind album titled "The King is Dead," it reached number one on the Billboard Charts the week it was released and has received rave reviews from all outlets. "The King is Dead" is The Decemberists' sixth studio album.

The album gets its title from the band's attempt to reconnect with American folk influences and songs. The past three albums released by The Decemberists focused more on British folk songs. "The King is Dead" refers to the death of their British influences.

The Decemberists have a sound that is very difficult to explain. It is not quite country, yet not quite indie. Their sound varies from track to track, making it almost impossible to define what they really are. They are definitely part bluegrass, part folk and part progressive. Those that do not enjoy country music at its purest form should definitely steer clear of The

Decemberists. But those who are looking for a different sound, something to relax and chill to, will definitely enjoy "The King is Dead." The acoustic guitars bring out a simplicity that is not seen much in music these days. It is a nice change to the busy world that keeps changing around us. One of the better songs on the album is "Calamity Song." Mixing more of the indie and progressive side of the band, it is definitely more upbeat. The guitar melody is extremely happy and Colin Meloy's voice adds a pure, yet not quite perfect addition to the song.

On the slower end of the spectrum, "January Hymn" is a delightful look into the chilly weather that dominates the month of January. Extremely simple, with just a guitar backing and Meloy's voice in the beginning, the song is beautiful and almost sounds familiar. In this case, however, it makes the song more agreeable. Listeners will fall in love with the song on the first listen.

The harmonica is a wonderful addition to the counterpart of "January Hymn," and "June Hymn," slightly more upbeat,

these songs will make the listener smile. The beautiful melody achieved with all the voices in the group are astounding. Not quite the masterpiece that "January Hymn" is "June Hymn" can still stand its ground among the others on the album.

"Dear Avery" is slow and feels like it is the missing love ballad from an '80s movie (but not in a poppy way). The song is slow and sweet and is quite possibly the best love ballad ever, without being a true love ballad, seeing as Meloy is singing about a boy.

The album as a whole is a wonderfully compiled work. Showing off the true talents of the entire band in every song, The Decemberists are definitely in touch with their American folk roots. While all may not like it due to its country sound, most listeners could at least agree that "The King is Dead" is well worth the buy.

B -Janaca Scherer

Javier Bardem's haunting performance lifts 'Biutiful'



Javier Bardem as Uxbal in *Biutiful*, directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu.

COURTESY OF JOSE HARO

MOVIES

Spanish actor Javier Bardem weaves a haunting portrayal of a devoted single father struggling on society's edge in modern Barcelona in Alejandro González Iñárritu's "Biutiful." Mexican director/writer Iñárritu, who grabbed audiences' attention with his remarkable three-part tale "Amores Perros" ("Life's a Bitch"), again creates intersecting stories, but squarely puts the focus on Bardem, as a father dying of cancer while trying to do right by his kids.

Bardem took best actor honors at Cannes for his moving performance and "Biutiful" has garnered an Oscar nomination. The striking, gifted actor stunned audiences in his portrayal of a real-life quadriplegic fighting for the right to die in the Oscar-winning "The Sea Inside" but many know him best for his relentless killer with the bowl haircut in "No Country for Old Men."

The film opens with a beautiful, dream-like scene in a snowy forest, the meaning of which does not become clear until the film's end. It abruptly switches to a doctor's office, where the single father is stunned by his terminal diagnosis. Confiding in no one, Uxbal (Bardem) stoically goes about his life, sweetly caring for his growing daughter Ana (Hanaa Bouchaib) and young son Mateo (Guillermo Estrella) in his tiny

apartment. The film's odd title comes from a misspelled word scrawled on a child's drawing.

Uxbal seeks out a living using his unique gift, the ability to communicate with the newly-dead, supplemented by fees for providing services to the city's illegal immigrants. Bardem plays a man seeking a kind of redemption in life's twilight. Uxbal has no time to be sick, juggling various money-making schemes and coping with his mentally-unstable, unreliable ex-wife Marambra (Maricel Alvarez). It is clear he has a checkered past, but now Uxbal is just devoted to creating some kind of stable life for his kids.

Unlike the director's "Amores Perros," which was peppered with dark humor, "Biutiful" is a heartbreaking drama, even grim at times. Yet the story becomes inspiring in the hands of the incomparable Bardem, aided by the director's occasional visual excursions into the fantastical, like vivid blue butterflies unexpectedly clustered on a ceiling.

Uxbal's physical decline is documented in an unblinking fashion, showing us blood in his urine or the results of chemo. Occasionally, we are startled by scenes of remarkable beauty or dream-like visions, often reflections of Uxbal's inner life.

Uxbal's personal journey is told along side tales of a shadowy underworld of undocumented workers. These subplots

explore themes of exploitation and the desperate lives of hidden immigrants in lovely Barcelona's shadows.

Rather than the sunny, art-filled Barcelona that tourists see, this story takes place in run-down warehouses sheltering Chinese immigrants and cluttered, narrow backstreets where African families crowd into shabby apartments, with rarely a glimpse of that other world.

Scenes of Uxbal with his children are particularly moving, as he struggles to help with homework, although he cannot spell. He cooks dinners and makes up teasing games when they complain about eating the same thing again. He walks them to school and soothes their fears while concealing his own deteriorating health. Uxbal is a man with an iron will and big love but insufficient planning for his own death. He was too busy making money to visit a doctor and to think he might not last as long as he hopes.

"Biutiful" is a haunting, even heartbreaking film, largely thanks to Bardem's powerful performance. Its complex, sometimes difficult subject matter and interlocking storylines are transformed into something magical by Iñárritu's lyrical approach and Bardem's unforgettable character.

"Biutiful," in Spanish with English subtitles, is now playing exclusively at Plaza Frontenac Cinema.

A - Cate Marquis

LATEST + GREATEST

New Films Opening Friday, February 11

"The Eagle"

(everywhere) - Channing Tatum stars as a Roman soldier in first-century Britain seeking to recover his family's honor and the military standard lost when his father's legion vanished in untamed Scotland 20 years earlier. Donald Sutherland and Jamie Bell also star in this dramatic adventure from the directing/writing team behind "The Last King of Scotland."



"Barney's Version"

(Plaza Frontenac only) - A chance to see Paul Giamatti's Golden Globe-winning performance, in a bittersweet, comic tale of the life and unlikely three loves of an irascible, yet loveable man. The Oscar-nominated film also stars Dustin Hoffman, Rosamund Pike, Minnie Driver and Scott Speedman.



"Oscar Nominated Shorts"

(Tivoli only) - A rare opportunity to see the wonderful little gems that are nominated for the Oscars in the short-subject category. This annual treat includes amazing animation, comedies, dramas and documentaries, each a delight.

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Natalie Portman in "Black Swan."

COURTESY OF NIKO TAVERNISE

'Black Swan' darkens human psyche

MOVIES

"Black Swan" hit theaters well over a month ago and is still going strong in sales to this day. The reason is simple: combine classic ballet with an eerie, psychological roller coaster ride through the psyche of an over-stressed, aspiring dancer, and theater patrons fall in love.

Natalie Portman plays the role of a young, ambitious dancer named Nina. Nina's mother (Barbara Hershey) had been a dancer as well, but lost what potential she had when she chose to keep a pregnancy rather than go through an abortion for ballet. As the company Nina is involved in begins to fall under, company head Thomas (Vincent Cassel) decides to recreate the classic tale of "Swan Lake" for a modern audience. In tune with freshening up the tale, *prima donna* Beth MacIntyre (Winona Ryder) is replaced by the young Nina, leading to Beth forcing herself in front of oncoming traffic following a grandeur-filled ballroom scene.

Following this chain of events, Nina's psyche slowly begins to unravel. Another young ballerina, Lily (Mila Kunis) enters the scene, cast-

ing a wild shadow over the tame world of ballet Nina has always known. Nina's ambitions and skills are questioned repeatedly by her fellow dancers, and even Thomas, but when the final casting list is posted, it is Nina who receives the dual role of the Swan Queen and Black Swan. From here, the world falls apart.

As sex, success, and fear intertwine to ultimately result in one of the most beautiful, bizarre and terrifying psychological breaks to be portrayed in the film industry this decade, Portman and Kunis lead an epic performance giving a peek into the true pressures faced by professional dancers on a daily basis. Anytime the filming process becomes overtly unsteady or seems amateur, Nina is suffering some sort of anxiety attack or an actual mental breakdown. The "lackluster" camera handling then is an intentional tool to help add thrill to viewers' experience.

Next up is the soundtrack. Naturally, as the film revolves around a recreation of "Swan Lake," much of the soundtrack consists of recreations of Tchaikovsky's traditional ballet. This use of recreations actually prevented the film from being entered

into the Oscars for an original soundtrack award.

However, nothing is lost for the soundtrack having been a recreation. Many of the pieces have been radically altered to fit the raw, sensual themes portrayed in the film and a few original pieces were even produced by English duo The Chemical Brothers.

The acting and performances of the film are stunning as well. Again, Portman's portrayal of Nina is incredible. Nina, a classically-trained dancer, used to rigid performance and on-cue movements, must learn to let herself go in order to play the lusty role of the Black Swan. Kunis, presenting Nina's polar opposite in Lily, serves as the focal point for many of the psychological breaks throughout the film and manages to balance her roles as fantasy Lily and reality Lily in a fashion few actors can accomplish.

Those looking to see a pretty movie about love and loss, skip this film. Moviegoers looking to be shocked, awed and possibly offended, this psychological thriller may be just the stop on any movie night. "Black Swan" receives a solid A overall.

A - Matthew B. Poposky

'The Lover's Dictionary' is Levithan's next big hit

BOOKS

"The Lover's Dictionary: A Novel" is a wonderfully written book that makes readers think about their own relationships. Written in separate dictionary definitions for each word, the novel is unique and a wonderful read that will keep everyone hooked until the very last word.

Released in early January by the acclaimed young-adult writer David Levithan, "The Lover's Dictionary" is his first book written specifically for an adult audience. Levithan has written several popular books such as "Boy Meets Boy," "Are We There Yet" and, perhaps his most popular, "Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist," co-written

by Rachel Cohen, which was turned into a 2008 movie.

Levithan's stories typically feature a strong, gay male character, which places his books in a niche of their own. His whimsical insight into gay characters gives readers something entirely and interesting. But, making this story stand out even more, the male protagonist in this book is straight.

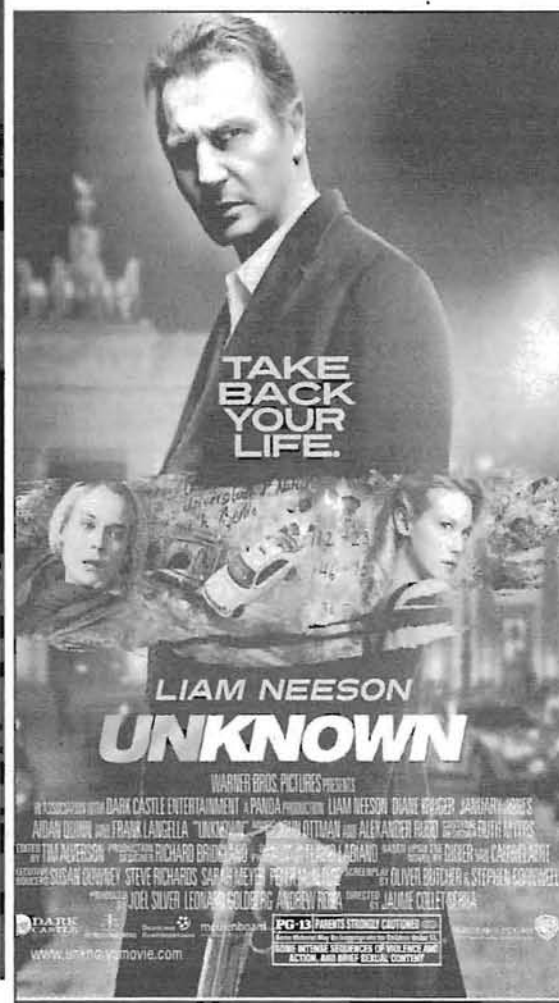
While topics like sex and alcohol do play a role in the novel, it is not explicit. Honestly, Levithan's young adult books are actually more risqué than this one. The topic of love does come up, which could make "The Lover's Dictionary" a little heavy for the young-adult reader.

"The Lover's Dictionary" revolves around the love of two characters whose names

we never learn. Written from the perspective of the male portion of the relationship, each dictionary definition delves further and further into his relationship. The story takes some time to make sense of since the story is not written in a linear way. Each definition jumps to a different point in the relationship that is used to define the particular word. Definitions vary from a few words, to a paragraph, to a few pages. But each one seems to make sense with the word that is chosen to define the relationship.

As the story develops it is easy to see how truly messed up love can be and how imperfect the relationship truly is.

See "LOVERS" on page 19



The Current

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IN THEATERS FEBRUARY 18

Features

Advertising student shines in her field

JEN O'HARA
Features Editor

LaWanda Nunley is a senior, mother, and the recipient of the Most Promising Minority Student Award from the American Advertising Federation. She was in New York just last week as part of her award.

The Current: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you ended up at the University of Missouri-St. Louis?

LaWanda Nunley: I am a single mother of a little boy who is seven. I grew up in St. Louis and went to Florissant

Valley for two years. I got my Associates in Graphic Design. I came to UMSL right after graduating [from] Florissant Valley to pursue a bachelor's in graphic design. But, I kind of didn't want to take that direction so I went to talk to one of the counselors. They introduced me to Professor Tucciarone. After meeting her and telling her what I wanted to do, advertising [was what I ended up with].

TC: What is the Most Promising Minority Student Award?

LN: Professor Tucciarone nominated me for that through

the AAF, The American Advertising Federation. Out of a lot of entries, they picked 50 students from around the United States. I was the only one from Missouri. They pick 50 minority students to come to New York and they have set up interviews, there's going to be advertising agencies. You go to different conferences, you win awards, you get your resume in their resume book.

TC: How did you feel receiving this award?

LN: I am so honored. I am shocked and surprised. Professor Tucciarone has been a great professor and my passion for

advertising helped me get to that point where I'm learning and loving it. This has been a great honor to receive this.

TC: How did you get into graphic design in the first place?

LN: I used to write poetry and I started selling my poetry. I would put clip art behind my poetry and put it in these pretty frames. But, the clip art was never what I really wanted. It kind of forced me to play around on the computer and put together something that would be a good background for my poetry. That led to church programs for my church. Then, I started [mak-

ing] greeting cards. I'm like, "I'm really good at this. I need a business or something."

TC: What do you like most about media studies?

LN: I love the advertising part of media studies; how an image can communicate so many things to people. Advertising can cause change, it can cause awareness, and it's just a powerful tool.

TC: Who or what is one of your inspirations?

LN: I think my son. [He's] my inspiration to go as far as I can go and teach him that he

can do the same.

TC: What advice do you have for college freshmen now that you are a senior?

LN: Take college [seriously]. Go to as many extracurricular activities as you can. Get as involved in your career or your future career as you can. Also, go out and get to know people. Don't be afraid to mingle with people in the profession. You [can get] intimidated with people who have made it, but Professor Tucciarone tells us all the time, "Just go up there and talk to someone!" And it's been great because you meet so many people in the industry and can call them for advice.



LaWanda Nunley is a senior, advertising major, and the recipient of the Most Promising Minority Student Award from the American Advertising Federation.

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Black History Month Spotlight:

Booker T. Washington: America's educator

JEN O'HARA
Features Editor

As college students and educators, the education is undeniably a value we hold and one of the many greats who found this to be true also was Booker T. Washington. Born on April 5, 1856 into slavery on James and Elizabeth Burroughs' farm, Washington had shown an interest in learning early on in life following the emancipation of African-Americans. Stories were told of the different jobs he would take to become educated. For instance, Washington began work at 4 a.m. at a salt mine so he could attend school later that day. As an even younger child, he offered to carry books for one of James Burroughs' daughters so that he could go to school. Since this was before emancipation, it was illegal to educate slaves. He enrolled, paid for, and graduated from Hampton Institute in 1875 and taught both children and adults for two years in West Virginia.

Washington believed that education and cultivation were in the best interests of African-Americans' futures in the post-Recon-

struction era. He was selected to lead a new African-American school in Tuskegee, Alabama that would be known as "Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute." In his quest for education, he politically promoted his school. He convinced white leaders and persons in the South that his school offered education that would keep African-Americans "down on the farm" and would be led with a Protestant work ethic. To African-Americans who were still unsure of their future in post-Civil War America, Washington offered an education that would enable them to have futures outside of sharecropping and debt and allow them to be more self-sufficient.

In addition to being what we consider at the forefront of African-American educators in the United States, Washington also promoted equality and attacked racism. Although he received scrutiny from both African-Americans and whites, Washington's ultimate quest was racial equality. He was asked to speak at the opening of the Cotton States Exposition, an honor for African-Americans, in 1895. His speech explained his idea that African-Americans could rise to equality through

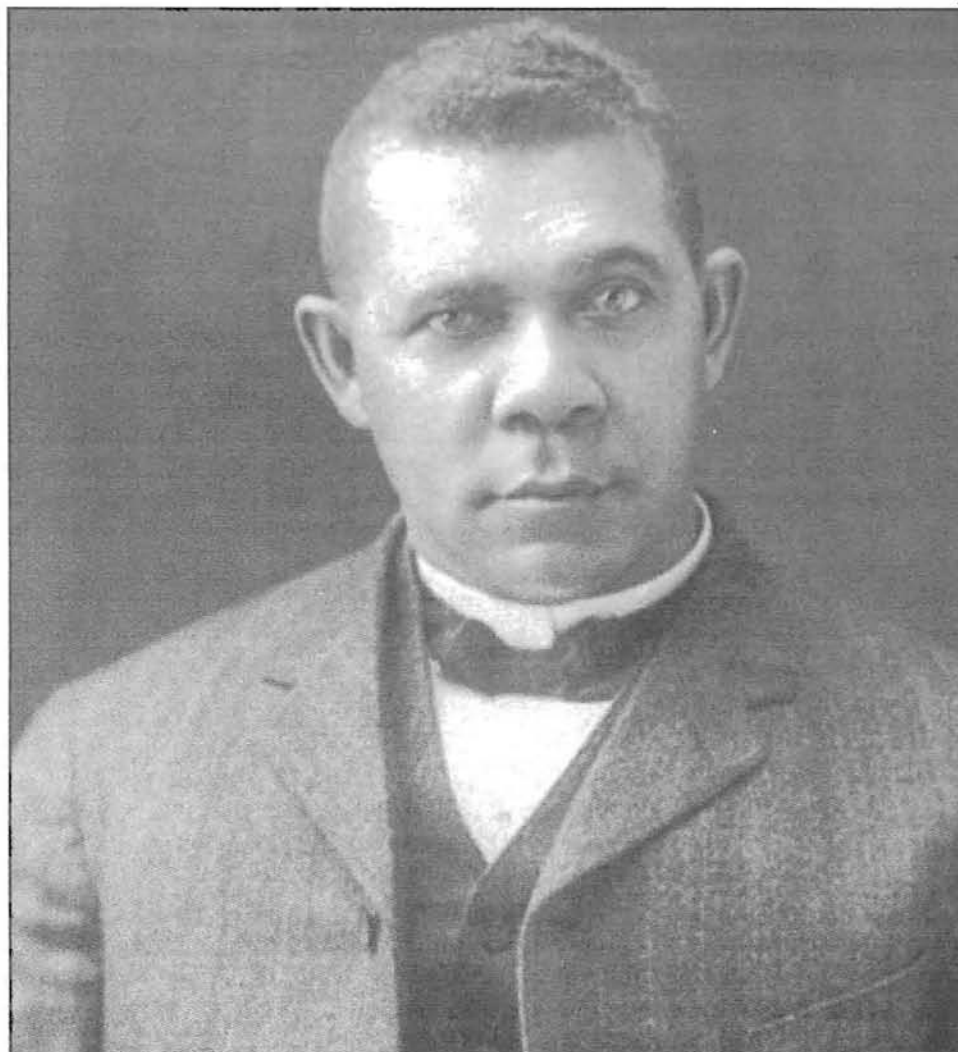
economic advancement as opposed to legal changes. One of the things Washington was known for was his ability to win over both races. Without the support of whites, funding for his school would have been nearly impossible and the school would have shut down.

In 1901, "Up from Slavery" was introduced. His book was his autobiography but also allowed for further promotion of his cause and ideas. Washington also served as a presidential advisor to Presidents Roosevelt

and Taft due to his acceptance of racial subordination. He was able to recommend minor political posts usually given to African-Americans, which then allowed influence of where certain funds went.

After 1909, Washington began to be criticized by new members of the NAACP who claimed a stronger action for civil rights advancement. Washington died in November 1915. Today, his work is still widely known as one of the original gateways to equality.

“ Washington began work at 4 a.m. at a salt mine so he could attend school later that day.”



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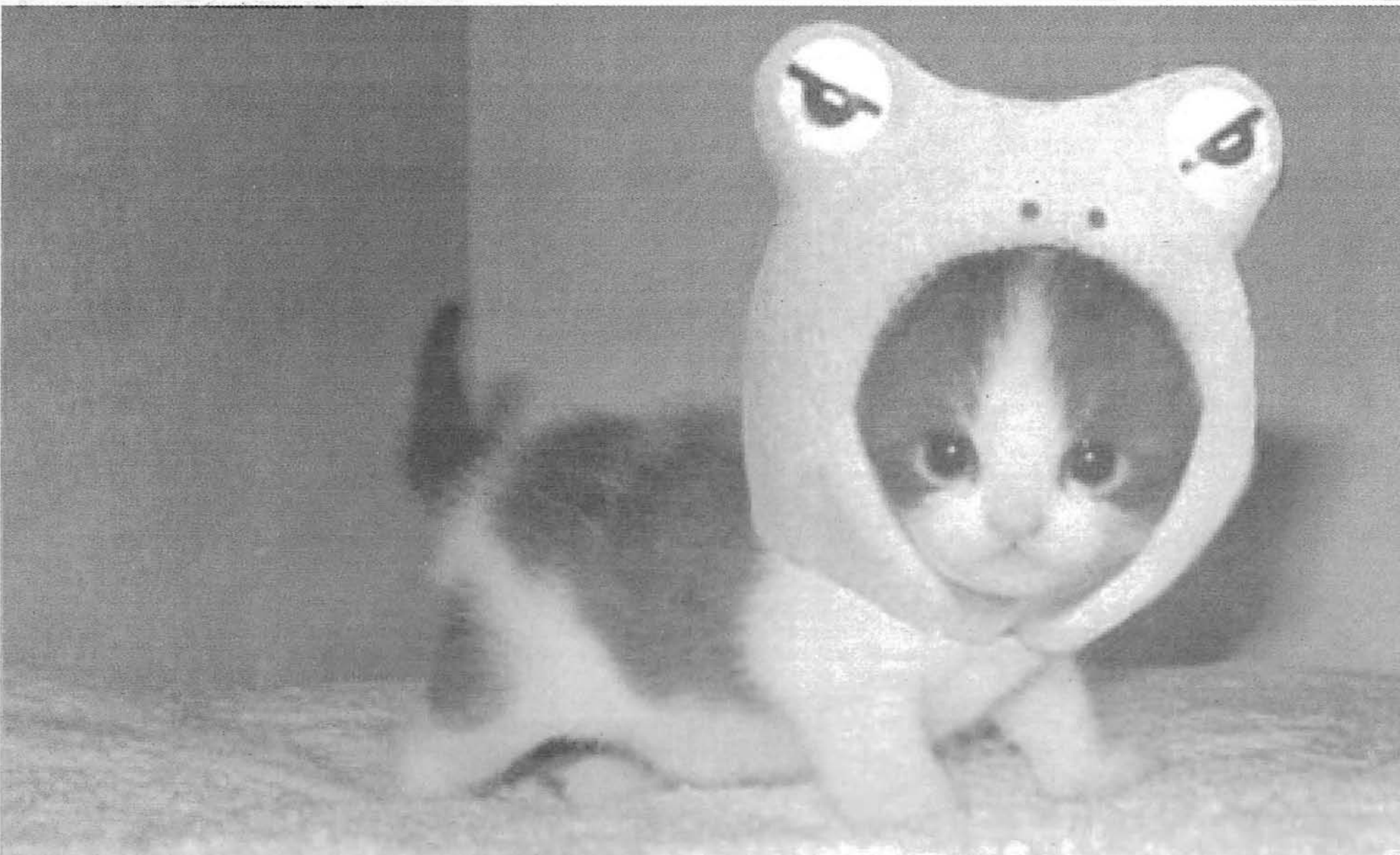
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Opinions

OUR OPINION

“Get raped, get punished.”

Thousands of women the world over are raped, in one fashion or another, on a weekly basis.

Rape impacts and affects every woman it happens to. Many come out with additional impact to their daily lives. Some may face immense, life-shattering injuries. Others may extract sexually transmitted diseases, be made sterile and, in many cases, unwanted pregnancy is a definite possibility as well.

Such pregnancies, in past cases, have often been covered for emergency contraception and even abortions in some cases. Such provisions, like many other health benefits provided by our country, were supported through taxpayers' dollars.

These services are often entirely necessary. Some women simply are not ready to have children, thus emergency contraception and/or abortions may be implemented. In the case of victims who have received injuries, or worse, it is entirely improper to refuse service based on the severity of the rape situation.

However, this is precisely what Republicans within the House of Representatives have written up a bill suggesting the American healthcare

system partake of. According to the “No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act,” no rape cases lacking exceptional showings of force, such as violent assault, would warrant any sort of federal funding for medical relief or services.

Thus, a girl who is drugged at a party or raped in her sleep would no longer be covered under Medicaid or any other form of taxpayer-funded insurance should she require emergency medical assistance. Instead, this girl must now pay the entirety of any medical costs out of pocket.

Even cases of statutory rape would now be completely unsupported by the federal government, leaving hundreds of girls below the ages of 15, 16 and 17 to wonder at their fate should the Republican GOP succeed in their goal.

Even the raping of women with limited mental capacity or women incapacitated by alcoholic influence would no longer be covered under this new bill.

Put quite simply, the anti-abortion side of Congress has decided they will no longer compromise, and that their views are clearly the only ones that matter. Compro-

mises over this issue have existed since 1976, and it is only in recent years that Republicans have begun rallying in such force against the concept of any rape victim being protected.

Of course, criminals convicted of rape will continue getting the same treatment they always have. A slap on the wrist, some jail time, they may even have to pay a fine or do community service.

If the Republican Party truly believes that taxpayers should not have to pay for abortions, perhaps other methods are necessary, rather than punishing the victims. How about increasing punishment for the criminals involved in these cases?

Prosecute rapists more heavily, and maybe the citizens will no longer have rape cases to pay for. It is absolutely immoral to punish a victim of rape for crimes against their body by refusing them medical services.

Unsigned editorials reflect the majority viewpoint of The Current's Editorial Board: Sequita Bean, Ryan Krull, Andrew Seal, Jen O'Hara, William Kyle, Cederic Williams, Jennifer Meahan, Zachary Kraft.

SEAL OF APPROVAL

Attacks on journalists reek of desperation

Hosni Mubarak does not like me. In fact, people like me are his worst nightmare.

Which is why last week, pro-Mubarak forces (read: hired thugs) viciously attacked the foreign journalists and reporters covering the revolution in Egypt. These brave men and women were kicked, punched, detained and interrogated, all in the name of free speech.

Kelly McBride, a media ethics teacher at the Poynter Institute, said it best in an article on CNN.com: “The point of silencing a journalist is to pull the curtain over what’s happening... It clearly conveys that the government is not in favor of democratic reforms because journalists represent free speech, and free speech is crucial to democracy.”

Of course, Egypt has been a “democracy” for the last 30 years with the same “candidate” winning year after year: Hosni Mubarak. In an effort to placate the protesters, Mubarak volunteered to step down in September, and not run for “re-election.”

Why September? It gives him enough time to do two things. One, steal all he can from the people of Egypt; and two, it gives him time to find a suitable replacement that he can control.

Mubarak is trying to do to Egypt what Vladimir Putin did in Russia: stay in power without looking like he is staying in power. Putin accomplished this by managing to get his puppet, Dmitry Medvedev, elected

as President after Putin's eight years in power.

And who did Medvedev choose as his Prime Minister? Putin, of course! It is upsetting that Mubarak is trying to do this, but thankfully, he most likely won't get away with it. After his proclamation of his intent to resign (in September), the agitated masses in Tahrir Square grew louder and louder, calling for Mubarak's immediate resignation.

The Egyptian people are not happy, and they will not rest until control of their country is returned to them. The good news is that day may be coming a lot sooner than September.

Commissioning attacks on journalists is usually a last-ditch attempt to try and end everything quickly and decisively. The reason is that if there is not anyone to report what is going on, the easier it would be to use force to end the revolution.

The attacks on journalists prove that Mubarak is getting desperate.

In a one-day span, according to CNN, there were at least 26 assaults (including a few against CNN's very own Anderson Cooper) and 30 detentions. Some pro-Mubarak thugs even eschewed the notion of detainment: Arab network Al-Jazeera reported that their Cairo office was stormed by armed thugs and then burned.

The newly-appointed Vice President of Egypt and former (still current, perhaps?) spymaster, Omar Suleiman (who most likely



Andrew Seal

would be Mubarak's choice puppet-President), was quick to denounce the attacks...saying the journalists brought it on themselves. “I actually blame certain friendly nations who have television channels, they are not friendly at all, who have intensified the youth against the nation and the state,” he said in an address on Egyptian TV. “They have filled in the minds of the youth with wrongdoings, with allegations and this is unacceptable.” Of course it is unacceptable—to the regime. The wrongdoings that are being reported on are those of the Egyptian authoritarian government. The people of Egypt deserve to know how Mubarak has plundered their country over the last 30 years.

The death throes of a dictatorship can be a messy thing to observe. If the protesters can remain strong, Mubarak has already proven that he can be broken. Now it is just a matter of time.

But for all the nastiness coming out of Egypt, there are some great things—amazing things—happening. *Andrew Seal is a Opinions Editor for The Current.*

What do you think?

Let us know at

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SCIENCE MATTERS

What went wrong in forecasting 'snowmageddon?'

In areas north and west of St. Louis county/city, residents were hit by the predicted "storm of the century" or, as some called it, "snowmageddon." In the city limits and most of St. Louis County, residents saw a fairly bad ice storm and moderate snowfall, but nothing very extraordinary. Certainly not "snowmageddon." Such are the hazards of weather forecasting. Clearly, this was a big storm. Over the weekend it appeared, headed directly our way. Disaster preparedness groups, city officials, streets departments, power and emergency personnel dutifully got the word out. TV stations put their weather watches into high gear.

Then one city official announced that this is not one of those cases where they were overstating the threat of up to 17 inches of snow, this storm could be even worse. It sent St. Louisans scrambling to stores for bread and milk. Businesses and schools announced closings. The National Guard was called up.

Snowmageddon happened, in Missouri west of here, in Illinois north of here, but not so much here.

What went wrong? Nothing, really. The storm happened, just not in the form expected. People monitoring weather radar online probably noted the storm track was shifting north by early Tuesday. But backing down from all that preparedness talk would have been difficult. Winter storm prediction is a complex business.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's website, snow forecasts are difficult in part because "heavy snow often falls in small bands that are hard to discern on larger resolution computer models" and "extremely small temperature differences define the boundary line between rain and snow."

People like yes or no answers about weather. Will it snow, how much, when? The lack of certainty in predicting weather feeds the views of skeptics in believing science knows nothing, despite all the tools of meteorology - satellite data, Doppler radar, surface sensors and computer modeling. But weather is a science of probabilities in an ever-shifting reality. Predicting long-term trends over large regions is easier than daily weather in a particular location. In Chesterfield, sleet predominated, while further north along Highway 70, near Wentzville, snow fell in white-out conditions. On radar, according to NOAA, sleet and heavy snow are difficult to differentiate. Snow falls when cold air meets moist air and where the whole air column is below freezing. Even a small band of warmer air between the upper atmosphere and the ground can result in partial melting of snow and re-freezing as sleet. A wider band of warm air, freezing rain falls.

With about 10 inches of snow equaling an inch of rain or 2 inches of sleet, it is easy to see how a predicted foot



Cate Marquis

of snow converts to a lesser amount of mixed rain, freezing rain, sleet and snow. The timing of the arrival of moisture and cold air has to be just right to maximize snowfall.

Storm tracks change over time too. Like predicting where hurricanes will hit, one can only forecast likely storm paths, and then track. Other weather forces can materialize as well. In the 1982 storm that dumped a foot of snow on the city, the forecast was an inch of snow.

What was not expected was the arrival of another system, which caused a passing storm to stall over St. Louis for a whole day, dumping all that snow here.

Officials making an absolute prediction and sticking by it just encourages people to scoff next time. Weather forecasters and disaster preparedness officials should just give us more honest percentages and updates as things change than absolute predictions of 'snowmageddon.'

Cate Marquis is Associate A&E Editor and a columnist for The Current.

POP CULTURE WITH POPOSKY

Mankind devolves in snow

It has been said before and it will be said again: stop freaking out every single time the world operates in a fashion which is not the norm!

Seriously, between the 2012 scare and the "snowpocalypse" Missouri just experienced, it seems the entire Midwest US just purchased a years'-worth of supplies in one week. Granted, when a massive snowstorm approaches, it is better to be safe than sorry, but the showing and insanity in grocery stores, the reckless driving, this all needs to stop.

It seems the norm that when the weather gets a little crazy, human beings start acting like animals towards one another. We watch cats and dogs get stir crazy when a storm is approaching, and point and laugh, saying "Look how silly Rover is behaving! He must know a storm is approaching!"

Well, humanity, stop looking at Rover when storms approach, and look at the behavior the neighbors exhibit, instead.

There is no need for grocery stores to be absolutely out of bread when a storm approaches, not with how many can be found in a general ten-block radius of strip malls. There is no reason for there to be a 20-car pileup on the freeway during a storm, not if the drivers on the roads would start behaving more intelligently when storms come in, rather than acting like morons. Yes, pointing fingers is nice, and

sometimes appropriate, but nonetheless, somebody was driving like a moron given the circumstances for such large accidents to occur.

Then there are the people who get irate and violent while shopping for emergency rations. First off, they buy everything they can put their hands on. Honestly, if the power goes out, the \$200-worth of steak is not going to be very useful.

Neither will several bottles of champagne or whiskey be necessary to get through a power outage, much less a lesser snow storm. What is necessary are easily stored food items, non-perishable, and, most importantly, those that lack much, if any, preparation on the cooking spectrum.

What is worse about these people, though, is that they are freaking violent! Getting shoved out of the way by a family of these people is horrifying!

They trample everything in their path, simply to get the last ten boxes of pizza rolls, even if the trampled were not headed for the herd's target foods.

If there is anything worse than the way people react when a massive storm hits, it would have to be the people who associate massive storms with some far-off "end of the world" prophecy.

Again, this has already been discussed recently, but here it is again. The world will NOT end in 2012! Not due to some supernatural or



Matthew B. Poposky

Earthly event, at least. Mankind may be stupid enough to bring about our own demise by then, but it will certainly not be something beyond our control.

Now, have weather patterns been increasingly crazy in recent years? Yes, it is rather difficult to deny this. However, this can be more accurately associated with, oh, say, global climate change, than some supernatural apocalypse predicted by a long-dead civilization.

Stormy weather can be terrifying, yes. It can require extra preparation, and can even cause mankind to instinctively behave in a bit of a fight or flight fashion (we are animals, after all). However, we are still human.

We are the self-proclaimed rulers of the Earth. How about we start behaving like it, and acting intelligently when something like this "snowpocalypse" happens, instead of trampling each other and wasting thousands of dollars on overstocking?

Matthew B. Poposky is a Staff Writer for The Current.

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We agree with Matthew.
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Point/Counterpoint



Are college freshmen more stressed than ever?

Our freshmen deserve better

Sometimes, college is not just about academics.

For some students, it can be a tightrope walk between “do I have enough money to go to school this semester?” and “can I afford books?” No student should have to make the decision between getting a meal plan or books for the semester. And yet, across the nation, it does happen.

With state budgets shrinking and less and less money being made available to students seeking financial aid, it is no wonder that a new study found that the emotional health of college freshmen is at an all-time low.

And that is not all either: the study also reported that college freshmen’s stress levels are at an all-time high, too. It is not surprising. The study, entitled “The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2010,” tells us what we already know—that going to college is getting tougher.

Some of the stress and worry can easily be attributed to the economy. According to an article in The New York Times, “the economy has only added to the stress,

not just because of financial pressures on their parents but also because the students are worried about their own college debt and job prospects when they graduate.”

Despite the decline of emotional health and the rise of stress, another score is on the rise as well: the desire to succeed. “Students know their generation is likely to be less successful than their parents’, so they feel more pressure to succeed than in the past,” said Jason Ebbeling, Director of Residential Education at Southern Oregon University, in the NYT article.

Interestingly enough, according to the study, gender plays a big role in determining the amounts of stress experienced. “Every year, women had a less positive view of their emotional health than men, and that gap has widened,” said the NYT article.

College might seem to be “easier” than it was in past decades, but the reality is that the economy was much better at that time. Ideally, money woes should never ever trouble students—but

the harsh fact is that many students cannot even expect financial support from their parents.

“Paternal unemployment is at the highest level since we started measuring,” said John Pryor, Director of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at U.C.L.A.’s Higher Education Research Institute in the NYT article.

With parents unable to gain steady employment, it means a lack of support for the college freshmen. More loans are taken out, and a student gets further and further into debt as they go along. By the time graduation rolls around and loan repayment starts kicking in, it will be tough for many graduates to find jobs—particularly in this economy.

And if grad school seems like an idea, well, that is more loan money piling up that will eventually need to be repaid. College freshmen nowadays have it tough, and it is about time that something was done to combat that.

College stress is no big deal

A study titled “The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2010” found the emotional health of college freshmen to be at an all-time low and stress levels at an all-time high. The survey relied entirely on first year college students self-reporting on their emotional health being “average,” “below average” or “above average.” Emotional health, experts say, greatly depends on how much stress an individual has in his or her life.

Though it is likely that there were some stressed out college freshmen in the Fall of 2010, there were no more than usual. If anything, there should have been fewer than in previous years. Did college freshmen in the 1990s have university groups giving out free massages during finals? No. Did college freshmen in the 1980s have 24/7 online tutoring or a writing lab that will edit a big paper before it’s turned in? No. But the majority of college students in the Fall of 2010 did have both those things.

And unlike college freshmen in the late 60’s and 70’s, 2010 college freshmen do not have to worry about flunking out and thus getting drafted and sent over to the jungles of Vietnam. That would have been a real stress-inducer.

If college freshmen are stressed out today it is not due to the poor economy and job market like some “experts” quoted in a recent New York Times article says it is.

If college freshmen are stressed out today it is due to the heavy burden that is sure to weigh on anyone’s soul who spends 14 hours a day dispatching aliens to their alien afterlife via Halo.

If the stress is not because of that, then it is from the blood pressure spikes that are inevitably going to be part of Monday morning when the weekend was spent in the throes of a Four Loko bender.

Now the really scary thing to come out of this survey is not that America’s college freshmen are stressed out, it is that America’s college

freshmen think they are particularly and exceptionally stressed out.

Amy Chua, author of the recent controversial memoir “Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother,” has been making the talk show rounds claiming that touchy-feely American parenting is producing generations of kids incapable of dealing with stress. And if this recent study is any indication, maybe she is right. Chua also says, by the way, that the “tiger mom” parenting method is producing generations of Chinese who eat pieces of stress for breakfast.

So if American college freshmen are stressed out now with their Psych 101 and Intro to Anthropology classes in which they only have to show up on test days, then boy, oh boy are they going to be stressed when they have to learn the thousands and thousands of symbols that comprise the Chinese alphabet.

Have something on your mind this week?

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STAFF VIEWPOINT

Teach, don't preach

A child comes home to present his or her parent with an unsatisfactory report card. When the parent attempts to lecture or discipline the child for the lack of achievement, they are presented with an additional report card addressed specifically to them. While this may seem like a sweet and childish way for a young person to "stick it" to their overbearing guardian, for the parents, it is an insult.

If Florida Rep. Kelli Stargel has her way this nightmare could become reality.

Stargel is currently working on getting a law passed in Florida that will allow teachers from kindergarten to third grade to administer grades to the parents of their young pupils. She strongly believes it is the parent's responsibility to provide the needs for their child's education. The grading would involve: a) whether the child is at school on time, fed and well rested; b) whether their homework is done; c) whether the teacher has the complete attention of the parent.

While it is assumed that this action is for the best, only bad can come of this. What started off as an issue of student academics will eventually spiral into a shouting match between parent and teacher. No parent, it does not matter what class in society, ever wants to be told that they are a bad parent; especially in something permanent such as print or email. If this law is passed, the teach-

ers will learn the hard way.

School administration offices would be over flooded with phone calls from parents claiming the teacher to have a personal vendetta against them and their child. Accusations of racism and sexism could occur, and possibly lawsuits.

Quite a few parents are workaholics and struggle with being around to help their child with things such as homework. They may just need to be informed about the issue. What parent wants to see their child fail? The appropriate time a parent should be called out is when their child is misbehaving in school or being disruptive.

It would actually be more beneficial for a grade school teacher to ask the parent what they believe, through observation, that their child needs more help on. It would be an easier way to get the parent involved in their child's education without intruding in their personal business.

And if they are unable to answer that question about their child, then they are now made aware of what they need to be looking for. Everybody wins without the shouting, blood shed, or complaints to the principal.

Less attention should be spent on what a parent is doing wrong. The focus should be put on how to help a student understand the material. Because if a child is unable to understand homework assignments at home, then that



Ashely Atkins

means that they did not understand it when it was being taught.

It is that teacher's responsibility, after being made aware, to come up with other ways to make that child understand. Some students are aural learners, some learn from pictures, some learn by doing, some learn through stories and for some it varies from subject to subject.

A "parental progress report" is in no way going to make a child smarter than they already are. As individuals, they have to be able to understand what they are being taught.

These "parental progress reports" are coming from the same society that is so quick to diagnose a child with ADHD or ADD. Our society has lost patience and has pronounced the last in the academic race as "dumb" or "un-teachable". Do not overestimate the intelligence of a child.

Ashely Atkins is Staff writer and a columnist for The Current.

STAFF VIEWPOINT

Is "Sputnik moment" a show of bipartisanship?

President Obama's State of the Union Address appealed to one classic American personality trait: competition.

The speech focused on improving the economy and education and how the U.S. is losing to countries like China and India, and Obama chose to compare these struggling societal institutions to the Space Race of the 1960s.

"Half a century ago, when the Soviets beat us into space with the launch of a satellite called Sputnik, we had no idea how we would beat them to the moon," he stated. "The science wasn't even there yet. NASA didn't exist. But after investing in better research and education, we didn't just surpass the Soviets; we unleashed a wave of innovation that created new industries and millions of new jobs."

He continued to say, "This is our generation's Sputnik moment."

He did not mention that the Space Race started out of fear of the threat of Soviet terrorism and paranoia that the United States was less than the best. Nor did he mention that the government has since had to cut back on that space program that apparently created these new jobs and industries because of the troubled economy.

Americans look back on the Space Race as a hopeful journey into the unknown, but a simple internet search will say that it originally started with the arms race following World War II. That escalated into trying

to reach space in a constant test of one-up-manship until the Americans landed on the moon. Only then did it begin to seem hopeful.

Obama compared the Space Race to competition with Indian and Chinese economies, stating that "nations like China and India realized that with some changes of their own, they could compete in this new world. And so they started educating their children earlier and longer, with greater emphasis on math and science. They're investing in research and new technologies."

He also added, "The competition for jobs is real." The problem is that the United States gave China and India these opportunities by outsourcing millions of jobs to those countries that could have gone to American citizens.

Most corporations chose to outsource because their products could be made more cheaply and they would not have to tangle with unions. This choice fueled those foreign economies, while the American economy went to seed. American companies share as much blame for this new competition as the foreign governments do.

Does the U.S. need this sort of paranoid competition anymore? It breeds innovation, yes, but it also breeds ill will and high international tensions. The United States just finished an extremely tense decade full of fear-fueled warfare. Does it honestly



Mary Grace Buckley

need another one?

Yes, the Space Race was impressive, but it took place at the height of the Cold War, which was anything but friendly. There must be an alternative to this tense competition that the United States has relied on for the last 70 years. After an insane decade into the 21 century, it may be time to find that route.

To be fair, Obama may have chosen to highlight China and India as competing powers in order to win over Republicans, who generally have a stronger focus on world affairs than Democrats do.

Republicans also favor the America-as-Number-one mentality that this speech exuded. In fact, one commentator on CBS said that the speech could be his "Reagan moment." But perhaps Obama could have taken an alternative route that tried to show Democrats' beliefs in a way that might appeal to Republicans instead of entirely playing into the GOP's dogma.

Mary Grace Buckley is a Staff Writer for The Current.

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Do you agree with Mary Grace?
www.thecurrent-online.com

Puzzles

CURRENT HOROSCOPES

ARIES
(MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

This week will be exciting. You are going to wear gloves every day for a week.

TAURUS
(APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Taurus, you normally go to a mall to touch your genitals and then wake up next to a hairy man. Make tonight different and piss on the toilet seat. You are not at all that bad.

GEMINI
(MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Recently, your twin had a robot arm installed. You think its going to be helpful in house cleaning, but you soon find out its for other things.

CANCER
(JUNE 22 - JULY 22)

In the tradition of the Vietnamese new year this week, get smashed tonight with some person of Asian decent. Preferably Vietnamese.

LEO
(JULY 23 - AUG. 21)

It's going to be nap time all week due to the storm. Take it all in and relax, apple juice is your favorite.

VIRGO
(AUG. 22 - SEPT. 23)

You were feeling kind of sick last week, but cheer up you're feeling better already. Spend more time rubbing your significant others genitals more for luck in the coming year.

LIBRA
(SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)

As a Libra, you are judgemental and have a brain the size of a small lizard. Take that small brain of yours and invest in a time share.

SCORPIO
(OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)

On this Tuesday, you will take trip. This will change your life in two ways. I have no idea what those will be. I'm sorry.

SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)

You can't stop thinking about fish, the smell, the taste, even the feel seems to make you smile. Start talking to your doctor about those pills again.

CAPRICORN
(DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)

The rash isn't healing and you taped on a large peice of duct tape to hide it, but somehow everyone knows about it. Buy a lottery ticket today.

AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)

You like cheese. You like cake. Eat more cheesecake. Paid for by the American Dairy Farmers Association... of America.

PISCES
(FEB. 20 - MARCH 20)

You made it out of the snow, but next week the forcast calls for lava, don't eat the hot lava. Also your lucky numbers are 1,2,3,4, and 5.

CURRENT WORD SEARCH

Black History Month

K U K B A O S I U X L A N G S T O N
J R Y Q T X I E F I T F N B M F W F
P C R R F U M A R C U S G A R V E Y
T B O M U H A M M A D A L I X T G J
A C T L E E T K E Y Q C D F I C C L
C M S Z H O U O A F O M O N S S I G
L C I G A H M I E L N P X Z K H V O
L E H G J F A B M R T R U Y R D I V
X W Q Z I D R X E N J O S N A J L E
F A T K S U C I U Y L T N I P T R R
R S I T A X H Z C E Q E O C A T I C
E H L R B N D R G A J S I R S O G O
E I Y M E F A N H R A T T C O C H M
D N Z H C H A B M A O M N U R S T E
O G P J N A C J W A L K E R G D S Y
M T Z O Y J Y O D H F M V G L E Y W
P O U A D R K R A B I A N X N R W K
C N M C T P J V D E S P I D O D K P

Africa
Civil Rights
CJ Walker
Dred Scott
February
Freedom
History
Inventions
Langston

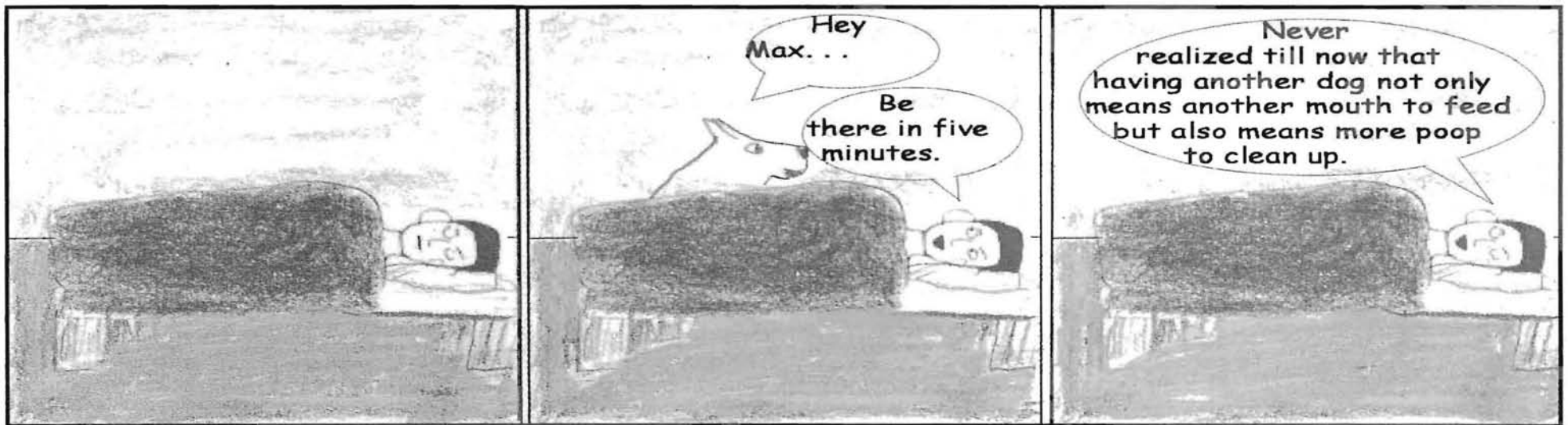
Malcolm X
March
Marcus Garvey
Maya Angelou
Muhammad Ali
Overcome
Protest
Rosa Parks
Washington

Comics

Simply Beagle by Karlee Sellars



Max and Lobo by Gail Fike



"LOVERS" from page 9

What appears to be a happy relationship in the beginning is not exactly as perfect as it first seems. When problems are pointed out in each character, it is plain that trouble is starting.

Perhaps the best definition given in the novel is: "love, n. I'm not even going to try." While it is one of the shorter definitions, it explains the entire novel. It is hard to give a definition to something that can mean so many different things to different people. Levithan explores the possibilities of defining love in other ways throughout.

While the novel itself is nice, the ending leaves the reader a little bewildered. It is hard to comprehend what happens to the two characters. Are they still together or did they end what appeared to be love? A few more definitions would have helped readers figure out what happened.

Luckily for those on Twitter, Levithan has decided to create an account dedicated to the definitions that did not make it into the actual book. 'loversdiction' posts definitions for those looking for more answers. Levithan is going in alphabetical

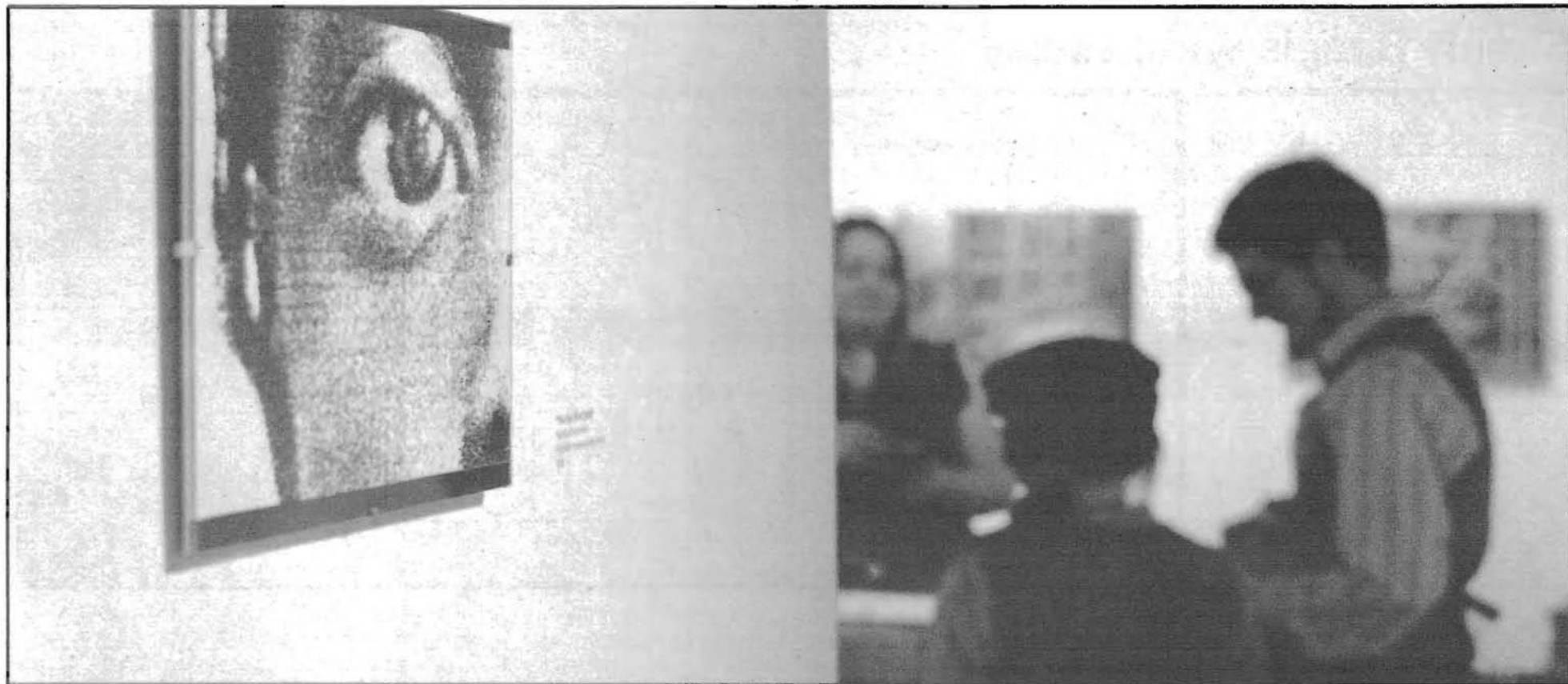
order, and is still in "A".

The novel is a wonderful read that will definitely cause readers to rethink their own relationships at some points. While the ending definitely leaves a lot to be desired, the entire book is not a loss. Those who have enjoyed Levithan's other books will not be disappointed.

A- -Janaca Scherer

What's Current

Your weekly calendar of campus events. "What's Current" is a free service for student organizations. Submissions must be turned in by 5 p.m. the Thursday before publication; first-come, first-served. Listings may be edited for length and style. E-mail event listings to thecurrentads@umsl.edu, with the subject "What's Current." No phone submissions.



"The Eye Of A Child" by Fannta Drummer at Gallery Visio on Thursday.

YUMETO YAMAZAKI / THE CURRENT

Monday, Feb. 7

Eyeglass Recycling (donations) in FEB

At 7:30 a.m., located in MSC Bridge Collection box and the lobby in Marillac Hall Collection is open to all. Pre-optometry Club at UMSL is sponsoring an eyeglass recycling/ collection to collect eyeglasses for third world countries. We will collect in these locations until March 4 at 3 p.m.

For more information contact Barb W. Brown at 314-516-6030.

Tuesday, Feb. 8

It's About Time! (Management)

From 2:00 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. located in 225 MSC (Center for Student Success-Conference Room) and open to students only. Learn how to improve grades, improve your quality of life and divide time between work and recreation. This workshop will help you examine how you spend your time and how you might be able to become more efficient in your role as a student.

For more information contact Antionette Sterling at 314-516-5300.

Biology Department Spring Semester Seminars

From 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. located in R121 Research Building and open to all. Dr. David Braun University of Missouri-Columbia is to lecture.

For more information contact Elizabeth Kellogg at 314-516-6217.

Wednesday, Feb. 9

Share the Love Service Project

At 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. located in the Office of Student Life, 366 MSC, open to students. Volunteers will greet clients, distribute meals, fill client orders, sort through donated canned goods and stock shelves in our nutrition center. Food Outreach provides nutritional support and enhance the quality of life of men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS or Cancer. Volunteers will meet in the Office of Student Life, 366 MSC, before 9:30 a.m. The carpools will depart at 9:30. Sign-up in the Office of Student Life; walk-ups are welcome! For Information contact Ashlee Roberts at 314-516-5291.

Thursday, Feb. 10

Egypt In Revolution

From 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. located in Room 331 SSB, open to all. Please join a panel of faculty experts for an informal discussion of the Egyptian revolution and its probable impact on US foreign policy, politics in the region, and, perhaps most importantly, on Egyptian society. Panelists: J. Martin Rochester, Ruth Iyob and Judith Cochrane. For Information call Terry Marshall at 314-516-6495.

Friday, Feb. 11

Procurement Services monthly surplus property tag sale

From 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., located at JC Penney Building dock, Open to all. Procurement Services is hosting our monthly surplus tag sale. Items for sale are desks, chairs, CPU's, monitors, laptop computers and other items too numerous to mention. For more information, call Tanjela Brooks at 314-516-5361.