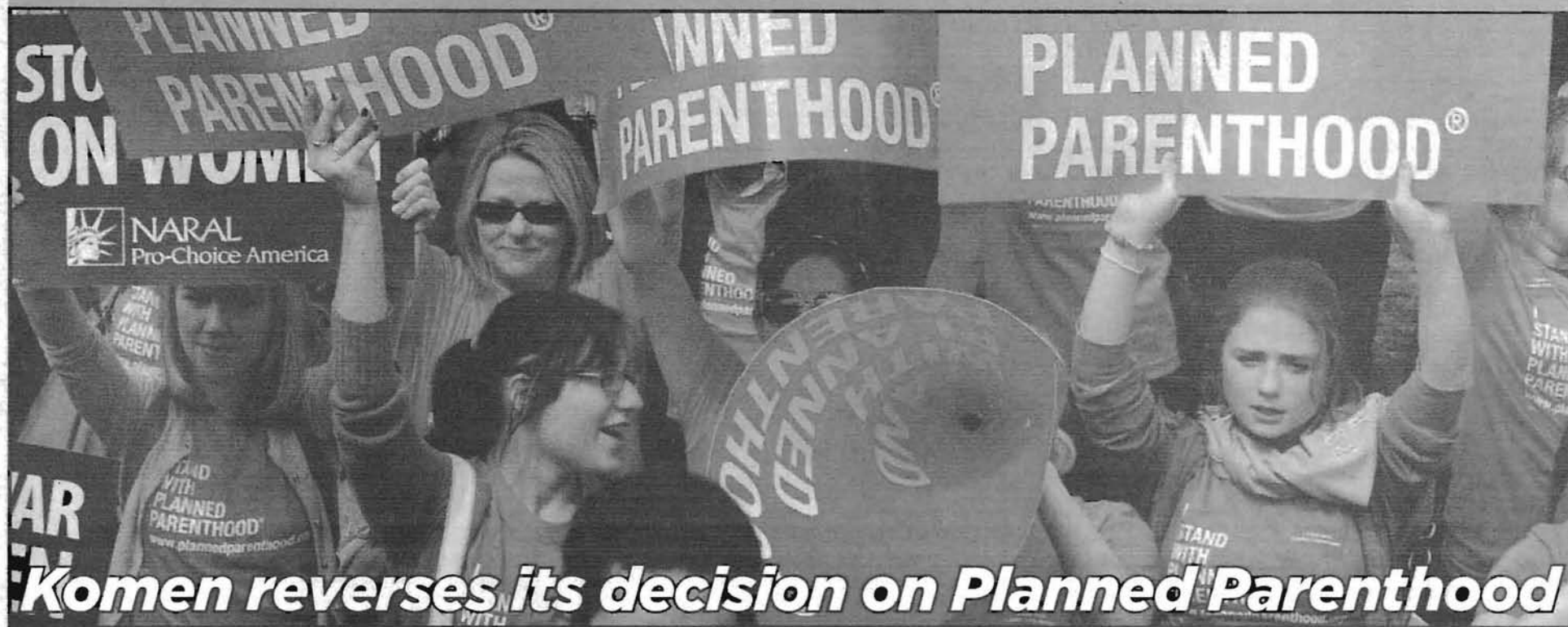


# The Current

WWW.THECURRENT-ONLINE.COM

Feb. 13, 2012

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## Komen reverses its decision on Planned Parenthood

Participants shout slogans and display placards during a rally to "stand up for women's health" at the National Mall in Washington, DC. COURTESY OF JEWEL SAMAD, AFP / GETTY IMAGES

**DEANNA MONROE**  
Staff Writer

Karen Handel, vice president of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, resigned on February 7, 2012 after a firestorm of controversy resulted from the organization's decision to cut funding to Planned Parenthood, the nation's leading sexual and reproductive healthcare provider and advocate. Planned Parenthood offers programs for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, teen pregnancy awareness, family planning and parent-child communication. Handel has acknowledged that she played a role in the decision to withdraw funding to the renowned women's healthcare service provider.

Handel said in an inter-

view with FOX News that the story her foundation is embroiled in represents a "vicious attack and coercion by Planned Parenthood." It has been alleged by former employees of the Komen foundation that Handel was the driving force behind the decision to cut funding.

"I clearly acknowledge my role in the process but to suggest I had sole authority is just absurd," Handel said to FOX. "I was part of the decision-making process, but I was not the sole decider," she said in an interview with ABC affiliate WSB. "I embraced the fact that I was involved in the project. I embraced the fact that I led the project." She went on to acknowledge that "controversy surrounding Planned

Parenthood" played a role in her resignation, notwithstanding Komen's new grant-making policies regarding Planned Parenthood funding.

She also acknowledged that there was intense pressure with regards to grants for Planned Parenthood, most notably from Catholic groups. In 2010, when Handel ran for governor of Georgia, she actively pledged to eliminate grants for Planned Parenthood that would provide breast and cervical cancer screenings.

Komen's decision to withdraw funding to Planned Parenthood was based on a prior guideline that prevented them from giving grants to an organization that is under investigation of any sort. Currently, Planned Parenthood is

the subject of an inquiry by Representative Cliff Sterns (Republican-Florida), who is looking into whether the organization illegally used funds for abortion-related services.

However, Komen revised their policy last Friday and are now stating that only investigations that are conclusively criminal will result in denial of grant funding, thus allowing Planned Parenthood's funding application to remain in good standing.

In response to charges of acting under pressure from anti-abortion groups, Komen founder and CEO Nancy Brinker said the foundation's decision to withdraw funding was not political and stated in an interview that she was "disappointed by the gross mischaracterization."

Brinker also said, "Let me tell you for the record that Karen did not have anything to do with the decision."

Despite the fact that Brinker refuted claims that the funding cuts were political, critics point out that out of the foundation's 2000 recipients, only Planned Parenthood was put on the chopping block.

In the ensuing chaos, Planned Parenthood has received more than \$3 million from thousands of people across the country, courtesy of Planned Parenthood's St. Louis region.

This will impact both groups. "The charity plans its funding decision on an organization's ability to provide mammograms," said Komen board member John Raffaelli.

Known for its annual 5K fitness event here in the downtown St. Louis area, the breast cancer charity behemoth raked in \$357 million in revenue last year, making it the world's largest cancer charity.

The decision to halt funding caused a public relations nightmare that grew out of a backlash from the foundation's many supporters. This has created a window of opportunity for other breast cancer charities, such as Susan Love's foundation, Army of Women, to attract donors. "Let's redirect all the money that will be spent on investigating Planned Parenthood into funding studies looking to find the cause and prevent the disease once and for all," Love said to potential defectors.

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GLVC updates and statistics

# The Current

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The Current accepts letters to the editor. All letters should be brief, and those not exceeding 250 words will be given preference. The Current edits letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number and, where applicable, student number. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to respond to and to deny any letters.

**AFFILIATIONS**



# 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 thecurrenttips@umsl.edu, with the subject "What's Current." No phone or written submissions.

**Tuesday, February 14**

**Heart health and diabetes awareness event**

From 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Located in the Nosh in the MSC and open to all.  
 This 2-day event, sponsored by Health, Wellness, Counseling and Disability Access Services, will have the information you need! It will also feature information for diabetes awareness. Did you know that diabetics have a 50 percent higher chance of heart disease (per the ADA)? Find out what you can do now to get heart smart and reduce your risk for heart disease and diabetes!  
 For more information, call Kathy Castulik at 314-516-4657.

**Thursday, February 16**

**Political Science Academy meeting**

Starts at 7:30 p.m. Located at 7103 Waterman Avenue and open to all. Dr. Duk Kim, assistant professor of political science and director of international studies at St. Ambrose University, will speak on "Two Koreas, Remembering One Nation: North/South Korea and East Asian Politics After the Death of Kim Jong-il." Maps will be available in the Political Science Department office in room 347 SSB.  
 For more information, contact Adis Alagic at adisalagic@umsl.mail.edu.

**Wednesday, February 15**

**JC short course - Microsoft PowerPoint 2010 basics**

From 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Located in Express Scripts Hall 104 and open to UMSL.  
 This course is designed to teach you the basic beginning steps of Microsoft 2010 PowerPoint. Learn how to use this application for giving presentations or developing slide shows that may be required for classes, your job or for fun. Topics include inserting images, what a "ribbon" is and how are they used, how to use clip art, how to design a presentation, custom animation, special effects, ideas for better presentation skills, how to print your slides, etc.  
 For more information, call Doug Williams at 314-516-6702.

**Friday, February 17**

**UPB: Mardi Gras**

From 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Located in the Oak Hall lobby and open to all.  
 Come on out to the Oak Hall Lobby to celebrate Mardi Gras! There will be mask decorating, King Cake and karaoke! It will be a night to remember!  
 For more information, call Katie Green at 314-516-5531.

**Monday, February 20**

**Bjorn Ranheim, Saint Louis Symphony cellist**

From 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Located in 402 JC Penney Conference Center and open to all.  
 An avid proponent of new music, Bjorn has premiered many works by living composers, a process he finds fascinating. He will describe his upbringing in a musical family in Minnesota, the path that led him to St. Louis and his career that keeps him busy both in and outside of the orchestra. He will also perform sections from the Bach 3rd Suite for Unaccompanied Cello, which he recently recorded on the AAM Recordings label.  
 For more information, call Karen Lucas at 314-516-5698.

## Crimeline

February 2, 2012 - 3:10pm Report # 12-42. Auto Accident - Provincial House Parking Area. Minor accident, two vehicles involved. Disposition: Report taken.  
 February 6, 2012 - 08:36am Report # 12-44. Theft - University Bookstore - Millennium Student Center. An unknown individual stole a pair of UMSL shorts and objects valued at \$43.00. Disposition: Non-student arrested on 2/7/12 warrants to be applied for.  
 February 7, 2012 - 4:00pm Report # 12-50. Stalking - Millennium Student Center. An UMSL student reported concern regarding another student that appeared to be following her on February 2, 2012 as well as eventually making contact with her. Disposition: Investigation continuing.  
 February 8, 2012 - 9:30pm Report # 12-53. Theft - West Garage. An UMSL Student reported that several items of clothing and personal items were stolen from their unlocked parked car. Disposition: Pending.  
 February 9, 2012 - 1:11pm Report # 12-54. Peace Disturbance- Benton Hall. Police responded to a report of an unknown juvenile refusing to leave the building. The juvenile was located on a lower level and when approached became combative and resisted arrest. The juvenile was conveyed to the station and later released to his mother. Disposition: Pending  
 For further details, visit safety.umsl.edu/police/campus-crime-info, or check out UMSL Campus Police on Facebook and Twitter.

**WEATHER**

MON. <b>35</b>	TUES. <b>43</b>	WED. <b>52</b>	THURS. <b>52</b>	FRI. <b>46</b>	SAT. <b>55</b>	SUN. <b>50</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>40</b>

# News

## University of Missouri system discusses increasing tuition 6.5 percent

**HALI FLINTROP**  
News Editor

Because the state of Missouri made cuts to its public higher education budget, a tuition increase may be the only answer for the University of Missouri four-school system, including University of Missouri – St. Louis, University of Missouri – Kansas City, University of Missouri – Columbia and Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla. The four schools are expected to adopt an average increase of 6.5 percent across the four campuses, with some affected more than others. Students of these public colleges will be affected most of all, because affordability has been a prominent reason for students to choose the University of Missouri system.

The talk of a tuition increase for the University of Missouri system is largely a result of Governor Jay Nixon's 2012 budget, which cut \$106 million dollars from Missouri's public higher education budget. This is something that public universities in Missouri cannot afford. Despite the \$40 million allotted by the state government to public higher education from a mortgage settlement, the schools must scramble to make up for a loss of \$66 million dollars in funding.

According to an article in the Kansas City Star, the University of Missouri system has already done a remarkable job at budgeting, making the best out of the lack of funding that they had before they lost the \$106 million. Steve Owens, the interim-president of the University of Missouri system, told the Kansas City Star that the schools have already been very successful at cutting costs. The system decreased the number

of workers, energy, maintenance and administration costs and reduced the number of degree programs to save money. "We continued doing more with less," Owen said of the University of Missouri system in 2011. But now the four-school system has even less, and something has to give. The only answer might be the students giving more money to the schools. STLToday.com reported that the tuition increase will average 6.5 percent across the four campuses, but that the campuses' students will not share the larger burden equally. The website detailed that there would be a seven-percent increase at the Columbia campus, a three-percent increase at the Kansas City campus, an 8.2 percent increase at the Rolla campus and a 7.7 percent increase at UMSL.

Students are panicking, especially those who chose the University of Missouri

system because of its affordability. The new, relatively large increase in tuition may be a deal breaker for some students who lack the ability to pay. For in-state UMSL students with a 12-hour course load, a 7.7 percent tuition increase would change the cost of a semester from about \$3095 to about \$3333. For an out-of-state full-time student, the cost would go from about \$7962 to \$8575. None of these figures were calculated to include room, board or other fees.

Unhappy students have written to the Missouri government protest the funding cut. Many believe that by underfunding public universities, the state government has demonstrated that it undervalues higher education. The Huffington Post reported that Missouri is just one of 41 states to cut funding to public higher education, despite the relatively recent focus on university education during the

2008 presidential election.

Renee Cisar, freshman, special education, said that at a time when students need to go to school to have a shot at success, it does not make sense for the government to underfund education at any level. "Currently, I'm a student," Cisar said. "One day I will be

a teacher, so I would love to see funding for public schools go up at both the university level and grade school level."

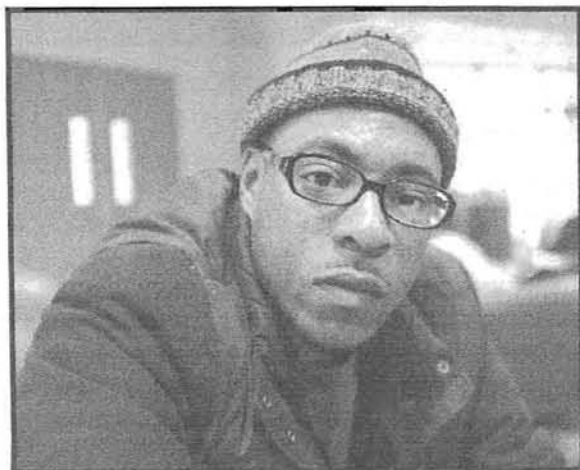
For now, it looks like UMSL and other University of Missouri students will have to do what Owens said the system already does so well—work with what they have.



## The UNDERCURRENT

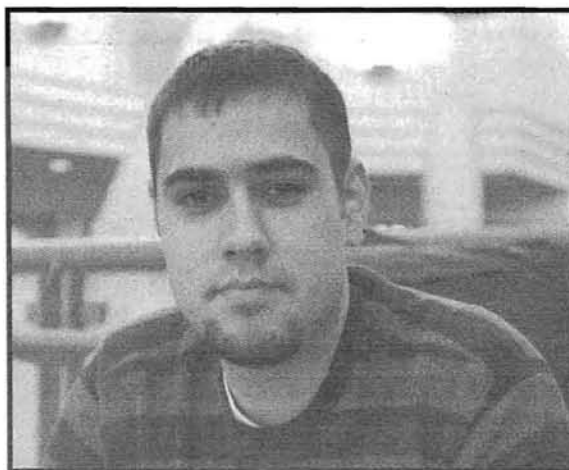
by Jarred Gastreich

### "What did you do for the Superbowl?"



"I had to work, but juggled back and forth from working and watching the super bowl commercials while at work."

Cortez McKinney  
Junior  
Psychology



"I watched the superbowl at home with my wife. My favorite commercial was the one where the M&M takes off its shell at the party."

Michael Trammel  
Masters  
Biochem / Biotech



"I watched the superbowl at a family member's house. My favorite commercial was the Doritos one with the great dane."

Keith Barto  
Sophomore  
Business Administration

# April Regester leads efforts to improve Missouri inclusion

**MATTHEW POPOSKY**  
Editor-in-Chief

April Regester is a professor of teaching and learning whose emphasis is in special education at the University of Missouri – St. Louis. She is aiding in the creation of a program meant to help improve the quality of education provided to students across the state. She has recently collaborated in the development of a new program called the Missouri Peer Supports Project.

*The Current: So you spearheaded the creation of the Missouri Peer Supports Project?*

**April Regester:** "I was approached by some local agencies in town who asked if I would be interested in writing a grant through the Missouri Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, which is a division of the Department of Mental Health. The program is a collaboration between myself, the Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis and the Missouri Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities. The project is ongoing, starting with the development of a pilot program for peer supports at three Missouri high schools. Then, the idea is that this program can be published and spread out to other schools in Missouri as a best practice model."

*TC: What does a peer support program actually entail, and what purpose does it serve for the field of education?*

**AR:** "Essentially, the idea is rooted in inclusive education. Most people are familiar with programs like peer tutoring or social clubs, which allow students with and without disabilities to come together with a focus on the benefits for students with disabilities. This project is different as it

focuses upon the benefits for students without disabilities, as well as those with disabilities. We are looking specifically at the academic and social outcomes for both for all students. It is about both groups coming together to help each other. They will both gain benefits from inclusion in classrooms together. We are looking at how the skills they learn will not only help them in high school, but also help them as adults.

Oftentimes, the general public believes that inclusion can take away from students without disabilities. They may think it holds back students without disabilities when they are included with students with disabilities. What research shows, however, is that students without disabilities involved in inclusive classrooms show increased performance, as well. It can help with their academics. It can help all students to have a better social skills that can lead to improved postsecondary outcomes. Students may consider new career paths they did not know about. The skills from such a program can help prepare students for careers in education and allow them to be more prepared for adult life."

*TC: Is there an opportunity for interested parties to learn more about this project? And what are the criteria for schools applying to become pilots?*

**AR:** "We have a summit on February 24, which will offer an opportunity to learn more about peer supports and hear from top researchers, as well as existing programs that focus on inclusion. We will also give attendees very detailed information so that their schools can apply to be one of the three pilot schools.

Those applications are due on March 18. They can apply at the summit, or can go online for information to mail in their applications, as well. We have a project committee that will look over all of the applications and choose the three pilot schools for our program. We are looking specifically at having a diverse representation of the state with the chosen schools. We want schools from all across the state. The application is a simple form and we will choose the schools based on the answers on those forms and a follow up phone interview. Those interested can go online to see the application and information about the summit at [www.recreationcouncil.org/news-and-events](http://www.recreationcouncil.org/news-and-events). The event is listed on that page, along with the application."

*TC: Do you have any final notes on this program that you would like readers to know about?*

**AR:** "For UMSL students, this is a great chance to get involved, especially if you are already interested in this career field. We will be looking for volunteers for this program and will certainly accept help. As a society, we are seeing an increase in people with disabilities and we need to know, as a culture, how to include individuals with disabilities in many different facets of life. This is a great way to learn about that and to get experience in the field of special education."



April Regester coordinated the Missouri Peer Support Project. COURTESY OF APRIL REGESTER

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READ  
The Current

# News @ Noon uses New York Times article to engage in sex talk

*Dr. Jennifer Siciliani discuss sex in the news with students at February News @ Noon Event*

**YUSEF ROACH**  
Staff Writer

"B.Y.O Banana," an open discussion about sex, sex education and its relevance in the news, was held Tuesday, February 7 in the Millennium Student Center's Century Rooms at the University of Missouri - St. Louis. The forum—a collaborative effort between *The Current*, *The New York Times*, and the Center for Teaching and Learning - was presented by Dr. Jennifer Siciliani, associate teaching professor and the director of undergraduate advising for the Department of Psychology at UMSL.

The assembly was the 2012 spring semester's first event for the "News @ Noon" program, a monthly exploration of pressing, often controversial topics present in today's news. The seminar was created to foster student and faculty extracurricular interaction, keep the UMSL community informed and promote the school's readership program, which offers free copies of *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Upon entry to the discussion, students were given a copy of a New York Times article by Yasmeen Khan, titled "New Sex Education Mandate Taking Effect," that was meant to inspire discussion. The piece explored recent legislation passed in New York City allowing for mandated sex education in public middle and high schools, an incredibly contentious measure among both liberals and conservatives. According to the article, "Depending on the child's grade, topics

would include physiology and understanding the male and female reproductive systems; recognizing healthy and unhealthy relationships; sexuality and sexual identity; handling unwanted sexual advances; the benefits of abstinence; birth control methods; and reinventing sexually transmitted diseases." The article added that parents are allowed to opt out of lessons on birth control and preventing STDs.

The presentation began with representatives from *The Current* and the Center for Teaching and Learning promoting their services, welcoming the students and allowing them to eat and discuss the reading material amongst themselves. About 15 minutes into the event, guidelines for the discussion, including hand-raising and the request to respect differing opinions, were announced. The objective was a cordial yet open discussion.

The well-attended event was not only informative, but interactive as well. The pushing of boundaries was stressed, yet the students' comfort level was respected. Dr. Siciliani began her lecture with a true/false quiz, gauging the sexual knowledge of the audience and, in the process, dispelling several commonly held myths regarding sex, homosexuality and the rate of STD transmission. The attendants were then invited to participate in an interactive multiple-choice quiz that required them to answer by moving to designated areas in the room, each marked with the corresponding

letter. Following this activity, students were split into smaller groups, allowing for more intimate discussion of the societal effects on and of sex.

"The general goals of News @ Noon are to get students talking to each other outside of class, [and to get] students and faculty talking to each other outside of class," said Margaret Cohen, director of the Center for Teaching and Learning and co-sponsor of the event. "It is just one small step towards graduating students who are good citizens, civically-minded students that are paying attention to the news. We try to highlight faculty when there are topics relevant to their expertise."

The timing of the topic was also no coincidence. In addition to arousing discussion of current events, creating a more cohesive student body and making students aware of available on-campus services, one of the purposes of the forum was "providing information to students in anticipation of Valentine's Day," said Lauren Masterson-Rodriguez, graduate student and assistant at the Center for Teaching and Learning who was an integral part of organizing and managing the forum. Masterson-Rodriguez also said that Dr. Siciliani "is an incredibly engaging speaker."

To conclude the event, a representative from UMSL's Health, Wellness and Counseling Services spoke briefly, detailing the amenities they offer, such as STD testing and emergency contraceptives.

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- ROCKWOOD
- ANDREWS ACADEMY
- BARAT ACADEMY
- BREHM PREPARATORY
- CENTRAL CHRISTIAN
- CHAMINADE
- BAYLESS
- CHESTERFIELD DAY
- RITENOUR
- CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE HIGH
- RIVERVIEW GARDENS
- NORMANDY
- CHURCHILL PARKWAY
- CITY ACADEMY
- CLAYTON ACADEMY
- RICHMOND HEIGHTS
- CROSSROADS
- DE SMET JESUIT HIGH
- FORSYTH
- AFFTON
- THE FULTON SCHOOL
- JOHN BURROUGHS
- THE KIRK OF THE HILLS
- LOGOS
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- MIGDS
- UNIVERSITY CITY
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- MIRIAM
- HANCOCK PLACE
- NERINX HALL
- NEW CITY
- THE PRINCIPALIA
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SAINT LOUIS



Twitter plans to utilize new censorship practices.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

# Twitter to introduce censorship policy; limits users' free speech

**OWEN SHROYER**  
Sports Editor

While social networking via the Internet has been the pinnacle of the digital media revolution, it is now at the forefront of global controversy for human rights monitors and advocates.

Recently, Twitter announced a new censorship policy. Twitter, it seems, wants to keep their hands clean and will soon be able to censor content based on location and law.

On January 28, 2011, the Twitter blog made a post entitled "Tweets Must Flow." In this year-old blog, Twitter made some rash statements: "freedom of expression is essential," "We don't always agree with the things people choose to tweet, but we keep the information flowing irrespective of any view we may have about the content," "This is both a practical and ethical belief," "We strive not to remove Tweets based on their content," "Freedom of expression is a human right."

One year later and Twitter has again blogged "Tweets Still Must Flow." This time they had a different mentality, along with a different game plan. While it is hard to break down this new "censorship" Twitter will be enforcing, it is easier to understand while looking at it subjectively. Now, if you live in France or Germany and you make a pro-Nazi Tweet, it will be censored from those countries, whereas a year ago it would have been censored globally.

But really, how is a website to censor billions of people tweeting from billions of spots worldwide without changing the product and its goal?

Even Twitter CEO Dick Costolo has admitted that the policy is not black and white. Look at it this way. If Twitter wanted this policy to be black and white, then they would simply remove Twitter from the locations where censorship is going to be a headache for them. For example, Twitter has already been shut down in Iran and China. So why do they not just shut down in places that are having censorship issues? The reason is the same as always - money. Twitter is still heavily relevant in many countries with repressive governments, so shutting down there would cost money and marketing power. Just the fact that they are willing to deal with this issue head-on means that they are still generating large revenues in these countries.

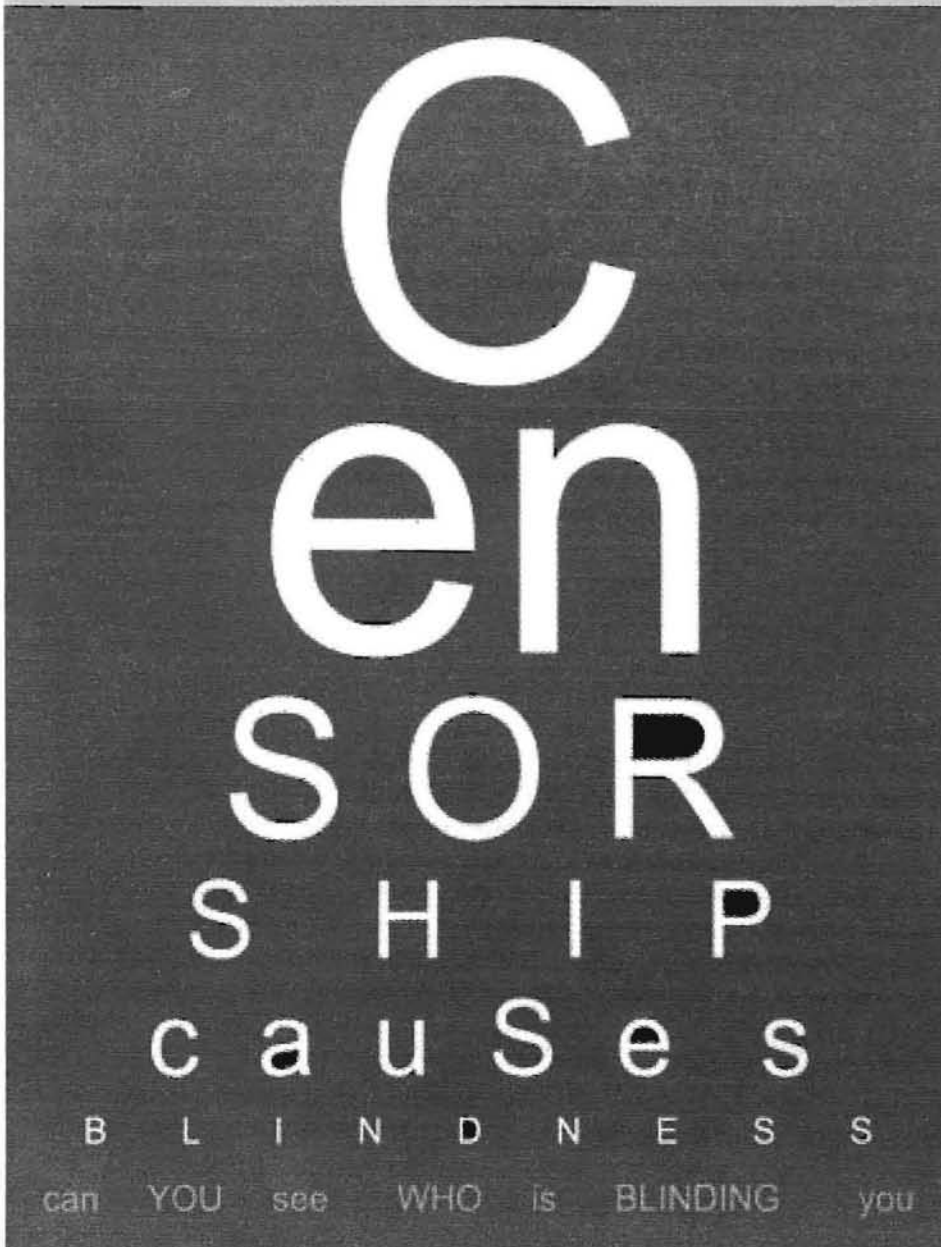
So what does this mean for Tweepers around the globe? Well, in the immediate future, it means nothing at all. America was not the problem when Twitter was forming their new policy. So unless you have been reading underground Nazi campaigns from a Twitter in Germany or information from Korea telling Koreans about a revolt against their government, you will most likely not see the effects of the new censorship policy first hand. But for us, it is not about the actual practice of this new policy. It is the aftermath. Perhaps this censorship is the forefront in what could soon be regulation of the entire Internet.

What drove this new censorship? It is widely believed (and seemingly obvious) that the recent revolts and revolutions in

Egypt and the Middle East have played a large role. Places where governments have been repressing their people are now finding new ways to do so. For instance, Twitter grows in Egypt; people in Egypt start using it as a discussion board for rebel acts against the government; the government goes down; the government threatens to ban Twitter; Twitter reacts by complying with government policy to keep business afloat.

So Twitter, originally designed for the individual right of expression and free speech, is complying with governments world wide, and many say that it is selling out its users.

So some groups of people can no longer use Twitter as a means of communication and organization. They will have to find new ways. But as I mentioned before, it is the aftershock of this Internet earthquake that could potentially cause more problems. As people around the globe learn about the Internet and how to use its power to gain knowledge and communicate, more governments will start seriously looking into how it is affecting them. If Twitter, one of the fastest-growing and most exponentially profitable web hosts in the world, is willing to give in to a few government requests to keep their business going worldwide, what does this mean for every other website out there trying to make a name for itself? Beware, because it seems that this may be the first step in what might soon be total Internet regulation. What will happen when such a resource is regulated?



The dangers of censorship to citizens worldwide.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

# A&E



Donna Childree Gotlib's "Florida Flight" is one of her hand made collages and are on display in Gallery Visio until February 16.

JENNY MEAHAN/ THE CURRENT

## Gallery Visio art exhibit "Fractured Realities" introduces Renaissance figures

**DIANNE RIDGEWAY**  
Staff Writer

The sound of lighthearted Renaissance period music playing in Gallery Visio helped to set the mood and time period for the art exhibit "Fractured Realities."

The music at the exhibit's wine-and-cheese opening on January 26 was provided by Matt Wiseman on classical guitar. The music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia ([www.sinfonia.org](http://www.sinfonia.org)) is co-sponsoring the free exhibit in the student-run Gallery Visio, on the lower level of the Millennium Student Center, in which "Fractured

Realities" runs through February 16. Artist Donna Childree Gotlib creates her work using famous Renaissance pieces as inspiration, chopping them up and carefully crafting them into collages with an entirely different feel than that of the original works.

With rich colors and playful composition, Gotlib creates characters that are open, honest and fun. The re-purposed classic Renaissance pieces come together to form their own sort of renaissance as they create a more personal and less stuffy approach to

providing a glimpse into the daily lives of some of these Renaissance individuals.

Upon entering the gallery, one first meets a couple in Renaissance attire who are surrounded by others in the background of a piece entitled "Afterwards, at the Reception." The figures appear to be asking viewers what they thought of a show they've just seen. Many of the characters seem to be conversing and often appear interesting and confident.

Some artwork in the exhibit features characters that appear lost in thought. In "The Distant Romantic,"

a woman appears to have been caught deep in her own thoughts, while her face tells exactly how she feels as she stares longingly into the distance toward someone who does not seem to have noticed her.

Other pieces successfully display their characters in their truest essence. "The Mighty Queen Mother" uses calm colors to depict a woman who is strong but whose face tells of her overwhelming responsibilities. One cannot help but muster up some sympathy for her. In the piece "Baby Boy," the face of

a grown man is placed on the body of a baby, and he seems to look to gallery visitors for an explanation as to why he is so pathetic. Viewers may feel compelled to answer the questions the subjects pose.

The artist provides enough detail for one to become close with the subjects, rewarding viewers with a deep glimpse into the personal or social lives of the people in the artwork. Some subjects have oversized personalities, while others just have oversized features. As in life, there is no shortage of ridiculousness. For instance, the piece "Florida

Flight" displays a man with a bird-like body hovering over a lake. There is a swan in the distance whose eye contact dares one to mention anything about the situation and who appears ready to laugh about it even louder than the observer.

The pieces shed light on some aspects of human feelings and social behavior that may never really disappear. If you are looking to meet some interesting people, they are anxiously waiting to introduce themselves in "Fractured Realities."

**Grade: A**

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## Enter Shikari mixes dub step with hardcore, create sound all their own

**JANACA SCHERER**  
Design Editor

Recently releasing a brand new album, Enter Shikari has once again made gigantic waves in the music industry. Combining post-hardcore elements with all the best parts of electronica, the band has found their own amazing sound that will blow the minds of all genres of fans.

Enter Shikari has been gaining notoriety ever since their first album release in 2007. The groups has invented a sound that is entirely their own that is hard to replicate (or even pull off at all, in some cases). While the band has lost a little bit of their harder edge since their first album release, they have developed their own sound and quite possibly pioneered their own genre of music: electronicore.

Hopeless Records released "A Flash of Colour" on January 16. It is the third album from Enter Shikari and has been the subject of hype since the band announced they would be releasing it. The album has already received an amazing reputation among fans and critics thanks to the release of teasers and singles, which began in the fall of 2011. Peaking at #67 on the Billboard charts and #4 on the UK Albums charts, "A Flash of Colour" has put electronicore on the map.

The music that Enter Shikari creates makes the

listeners wants to move. The passion that can be found in all of their songs—whether it results from anger or simply enthusiasm for the music is astounding. The drops that are created with the mix of hardcore elements and dub step are so entrancing that it is impossible for the listener not to want to breakdown. Dub step, which leaves its fans either loving or hating its music, is filled with heavy electronic beats and bass drum. Combining this with the heavy lyrics and vocal styles of post-hardcore, Enter Shikari has created their most musically complex and appealing album yet

The first single from "A Flash of Colour," "Sssnakepit," was released in September 2011. The song mixes all sorts of musical elements, including post-hardcore, electronic and even a tolerable form of dub step. It is easily the best listen on the entire album.

On the softer side, "Search Party" is a hauntingly beautiful song. Still packing the same punch that all of Enter Shikari's music has, it is an even better example of the simple mixture of dub step elements in their music. Small touches of heavy bass and uses of percussion meld into the mix of a song that, simply put, cannot be duplicated. Listen to this song first and you will not be disappointed.

After that, skip forward to "Arguing With

Thermometers." Fast-paced and with more dub step thrown into the mix, this song is extremely catchy and arguably one of their best pieces ever. Extremely catchy, perhaps even for those who do not like dub step or hardcore music, "Arguing With Thermometers" has found the perfect meld between lead singer Roughton Reynolds' vocal abilities and the defining elements of dub music.

Looking for the ultimate motivating song? "Gandhi Mate, Gandhi" is by far the best. This song is insanely amazing, utilizing absolutely winning lyrics with the powerful music that the album features. Listeners purchasing the album will definitely wear out their repeat button with this song.

All in all, Enter Shikari has proven with "A Flash of Colour" that they are around for the long run. Using their musical abilities to grow and adapt, the band has learned to mix current popular music in their own way. By using the music to meet their needs and creating a new sound instead of just selling out to the way dub step is currently being used, Enter Shikari will not only satisfy their old fans but also create new fans that will not be able to leave this album alone.

Grade: A

## LATEST + GREATEST

*A Calendar for Lovers*

Many restaurants have specials for Valentine's Day, but here are some different events for the romantic holiday. All events on February 14.

### White Castle romantic dinner

A different idea for a Valentine's Day dinner. They have the candlelight, romantic décor and table service, but they have the belly-bombers too. Offered at all area White Castles on Valentine's Day, from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m., but you do have to make a reservation by calling (314) 535-7430.

### "West Side Story" at the Fox

If you can spring for theater tickets, there is hardly a more romantic choice than the musical "West Side Story," which opens at the Fox Theater on Valentine's Day. Tickets range from \$15 to \$82. Info is on the Fox's website [www.fabulousfox.com](http://www.fabulousfox.com).

### Valentine Laughs at Comedy Etc.

Maybe you have a funny valentine. If you are looking for a fun date and do not mind going to the East Side, the comedy club Comedy Etc. in Fairview Heights offers hypnotist Tony Z in a special Valentine's Day show. Tickets are \$15. More info available by calling (618) 628-4242.

### Tower Grove Tuesday concert

Romantic and free, what could be better? Free Valentine's Day concert by members of the St. Louis Symphony takes place in the beautiful Piper Palm House in Tower Grove Park. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., concert begins at 7 p.m. Seating is first-come, first-served.

### Valentine's Day concert at Jazz at the Bistro

Another music lovers option, Valentine's Day at one of St. Louis' premiere jazz clubs, Jazz at the Bistro, 3536 Washington Avenue in Grand Center. The Erin Bode Group performs in two shows, at 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 a person.

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# Stars of Comedy Central's new TV show Key and Peele talk comedy

## Key and Peele TV show misses more than hits but still a good time

**YUSEF ROACH**  
Staff Writer

The stars of Comedy Central's new sketch show, "Key and Peele," discussed with *The Current*, some of its inspiration and appeal. The show premiered Tuesday the 7th at 9:30 p.m.

*The Current:* "Why do you guys think college students will like your show?"

**Keegan-Michael Key:** "I would hope that college students would comprehend the show almost as much, if not more so, than other people because we're writing material, as you may have heard Jordan say before, trying to look at things in a new and different way. ... I think students are the people who go, 'Oh that's interesting, I've thought of that before.' Or someone who's older might be completely blown away by it. I think what we're doing is for everyone, but we are trying to write comedy for a 21st-century world, and you guys are fully ensconced in that world: forming and shaping it."

**Jordan Peele:** "We grew up watching television and we like to think the show is, in some way, a mirror of pop culture."

*TC:* Where did a lot of the inspiration for the race-related comedy come from?

**KMK:** "It's mostly biographical. It comes from the way we see the world

as biracial Americans. Everybody has a filter they see the world through. Jordan and I have a very similar one. It's why we wanted to partner up in the first place."

**JP:** "In comedy you're constantly looking for something fresh, something new, something you haven't seen in the same old sketch show time and time again... We really wanted to make people ask themselves, 'What is race?'"

*TC:* Are there any topics you'd love to include in the show, but that might be too risky for television?

**JP:** "Our general guideline with how to determine where the line is, is how funny it is to us. If something is genuinely funny and it's one of those things that makes everyone in the room laugh, then something real, something true and comedically precious is happening. Ultimately, my theory is that nothing is off-limits if you can get the laugh. It just takes a masterful hand to get it with that subject matter."

**KMK:** "I think some people think, 'Yay, I was funny because I was offensive,' and that's not necessarily the case. We understand you're not always going to make everybody laugh, because everybody comes from different places. We try to find these truthful

nuggets in scenes that'll allow everyone to go 'Haha.'"

*TC:* You guys are both *MadTV* alum and sketch comedy vets. Are we going to see any familiar faces, particularly to comedy fans?

**JP:** Our friends from *MadTV* are some of the most talented, funny, nicest people in the world. However, there is a concerted effort to make this show distinct from *MadTV*. So in this season we don't have any of those guys. We have some of our other friends who are also great and hilarious. Next season I think we'll mix it up and bring some familiar faces.

**KMK:** That's our hope. If there's another season you will definitely see some familiar faces.

*TC:* You guys mentioned the process of getting material and getting it to air. Is there anything happening right now that excites you comedically?

**JP:** "Because of the schedule we run on our show, that sort of dictates the stuff that we choose. That is to say stuff that is a story one week, we have to recognize that's not going to be fresh when the show comes out. So if we're doing a sketch about Obama talking to Jan Brewer on the tarmac, we have to know that when this sketch comes out, people are going to be like 'What?'"

**KMK:** "Yeah, that was like seven months ago!"

**YUSEF ROACH**  
Staff Writer

Ever since Dave Chappelle's abrupt departure in late 2004, Comedy Central has been in constant search of its next sketch show mega-hit. Many incredibly successful comedians, from Demetri Martin to Nick Swardson, and even the oft-maligned Carlos Mencia, have taken the reins of the network's coveted prime-time slot, with varying amount of success.

Now Comedy Central is trying a new approach, placing trust and production power behind two relatively unknown but extremely experienced sketch veterans, Jordan Peele and Keegan-Michael Key, two *MadTV* alumni recognizable from their individual appearances in other projects, such as films and television shows like "Little Fockers," "Children's Hospital," "Role Models" and "Reno 911."

The show travels oft-tread comedy ground yet again. Race seems to be the primary theme in the show, although something must be said for it being shown through a somewhat fresh perspective. The titular stars of the program state up front their mixed race upbringings and the effect their backgrounds have had on their present lives. One obvious entertainment advantage of their appearances and demeanors is the diversity

it grants Key and Peele regarding roles. The two are capable of portraying a multitude of culturally varying characters.

Another overused trope, taken in a new direction, is the relationship between husband and wife. In one skit, two friends are trying to furtively dish all the trash they talk to their wives, reassuring themselves of their masculinity while simultaneously on a constant lookout for their wives, whom they fear. The skit is among the ones aired earlier in the show and drags on a little too long, but the premise and the pair's fluid physical comedy conjure a few smiles, if nothing else.

Unfortunately, the pilot misses more than it hit. When successful, however, the pair proves to possess hilarious, almost flawless timing and chemistry. The funniest skit of the night, by far, involves a dopey, incredibly unskilled liar visiting a very cooperative doctor to attain a typically illicit substance. The laughter incited by the first few lines lasts so long that it more than makes up for the subsequent "Lil' Wayne in Prison" taped piece. That one feels contrived and outdated (and, much to the chagrin of many, recurs throughout the episode). It works against the show as a whole, constantly breaking the pacing that—if kept rolling between the longer, more fleshed-out

bits—could have made for an excellent comedy viewing experience.

Another particularly noteworthy segment involves Key playing an overly-dramatic British reality show chef in the vein of Gordon Ramsay. Peele's character's dish is being judged and the well-written, confusing lines of Key, coupled with Peele's corresponding reactions, elicited laughs. The abrupt end humorously caps off an engagingly tense bit.

Peele is noted in particular for his Barack Obama impression, which is utilized in this episode (and immediately arouses in the viewer sarcastic feelings like, "Oh boy, who didn't see this coming?" and "This is going to get old quick"). While it proves somewhat accurate, the bit seems stale and boring, even with the energy of Key, who plays the President's "anger translator." The premise is interesting; however, it could be conveyed in a funnier, more gripping way.

"Key and Peele's" first episode is an uneven half hour. Some of the segments feel somewhat incomplete, fizzling out with one or two main jokes that are driven home a little too hard (see "Lil' Wayne in Prison"). The parts that hit, however, are worthy of watching and leave one interested in seeing what the duo has left to offer.

**Grade: B-**

We put out on Mondays.

# The Current



Jeff Talbott, left, as Jack Lawson, Morocco Omari, center, as Henry Brown and Mark Elliot Wilson, right, as Charles Strickland, in the play *Race*.

COURTESY OF JERRY NAUNHEIM JR

## Rep's *Race* is worthy production, though a disquieting play

**CATE MARGUIS**  
A&E Editor

"*Race*" is the title and the underlying issue in David Mamet's drama about a law firm planning the defense of a wealthy white man accused of raping a black woman, which is the current production on the Repertory Theater of St. Louis' Browning Mainstage in the Loretto-Hilton Theater through March 4.

The storyline echoes the real-life case of Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the wealthy French political figure accused of raping a maid in New York last year. In fact, the 2009 play pre-dates that event. The play by the award-winning Mamet had a year-long run on Broadway.

Law partners Henry Brown (Morocco Omari) and Jack Lawson (Jeff

Talbott) are black and white, respectively, so their law firm looks like a good choice for a rich white guy hoping to only down the racial aspects of a case. Charles Strickland (Mark Elliot Wilson) is just such a rich white guy, casting himself in the most politically-correct light while claiming innocence. The law partners are aided by a recently-hired junior lawyer named Susan (Zoocy Martinson), who is young, beautiful, talented and black.

The financial allure of a wealthy client tempts Brown and Lawson but their eagerness is tempered by the fact that theirs is the second law firm this client visited. This fact raises suspicions, but one fateful step inadvertently commits the law firm to the case,

whether they want it or not.

"*Race*" raises uncomfortable topics, but Mamet is a master of dialog and character, which means that the exploration is intelligent, often humorous and sometimes disquieting. Mamet's sparkling, quick-witted and often bitingly funny dialog. He entertains when the law partners discuss an angle for the defense. Once committed to the case, their concern is not guilt or innocence, as Lawson wittily explains, only how they are going to convince the jury, their "audience," of his innocence, even if it means convincing them that their client did something else more outrageous.

The mix of braininess, verbal fireworks, sharp humor and cynicism is part

of what makes Mamet's plays fun. That the playwright does not shy away from difficult subjects makes them thought-provoking and gripping. That they also yield few easy answers makes them sometimes disquieting. All are the case for "*Race*."

There is hardly a hotter topic than race. Mamet's political drift toward the right means the play often treads on incendiary territory. Many topics are touched on, such as class privilege, political correctness and affirmative action. The context of discussion is race but it could as easily be sexism. Curiously, that subject is never raised, although many of its issues become much clearer, ethically and morally, through that lens.

The performance makes

this production. The actors make the most of Mamet's sparkling dialog, building riveting characters. Jeff Talbott as Lawson has the most lines in the first act, crafting an out-going razor-sharp lawyer in a high-energy and highly entertaining performance.

Morocco Omari's Brown is a more dignified, reserved person, letting Lawson do the talking until critical junctures. When Brown weighs in, he is the kind of person who commands attention and the stage. Mark Elliot Wilson as Strickland wraps himself in a politically-correct blanket, ricocheting between privileged arrogance, embarrassment and a desire to confess, although not to the crime. Zoocy Martinson's Susan attends closely to her

mentor, Lawson, in the first act but is a more fiery figure in the second, bringing forth unspoken subtext about her employers and the client.

The set is a perfect visual metaphor. The single set is a modern-style conference room surrounded by glass walls with sliding glass doors, decorated by a large copy of the preamble to the Constitution. All the glass is frosted, so we see people outside the room but details are obscured.

"*Race*" is a disquieting play but a worthy production.

Student discounts and bargain rush tickets are available for the Rep's production of "*Race*" on the Webster University campus, 130 Edgemoor Road, through March

**Grade: B**

# Features

## Professor David Weisburd explains the demographics of crime

ANGELA ACTON  
Staff Writer

Dr. David Weisburd, a distinguished professor in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at the George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, presented "The Criminology of Place: Street Segments and Our Understanding of the Crime Problem" at the Millennium Student Center of the University of Missouri - St. Louis on February 6.

With around 60 people in attendance, the event welcomed a variety of guests throughout the UMSL campus, including faculty member Timothy Maher, associate teaching professor, undergraduate director and outreach program coordinator for the criminology and criminal

justice department, Ph.D.

"David Weisburd and I worked together at the police foundation in Washington, D.C. So when he is in town, I am here to support him," Maher said. "And I know that he is going to be talking about community crime, police stuff. I teach the police; I write about the police. I am into cop stuff."

Lee Ann Slocum, assistant professor, criminology and criminal justice, Ph.D., was excited for the lecture as well. "I am hoping to learn a lot more about how crime varies across places and the correlations of crime," Dr. Slocum said.

Not only did faculty come out to the event, but many CCJ students were present, including Rob Dominano, graduate

student, criminology, Ph.D.

program. "We are here to learn more information," Dominano said. "Weisburd is talking about spatial disorganization."

Even the police department was represented at the presentation. "The Neighborhood Legion is a new program in the city and when certain neighborhoods get approved they are going to get their own police office," Officer Marc O'Brien said. "We are going to train the residents in what to look for on the street, et cetera. And Officer Alderman is here for the same reason. [The program] is like a 'citizen on patrol' thing."

The main thing to take away from Weisburd's lecture is "Location, location, location."

"I think people should identify the fact that crime is very tightly clustered in urban areas," Weisburd said. "That provides us with the opportunity to focus police resources very effectively." It is Weisburd's belief that 25 percent of inner city crime comes from only one percent of city streets.

The three themes of the lecture were, that crime is strongly coupled to place, that the coupling occurs as a very micro-geographic unit of analysis, and that the coupling is linked to key risk and protective factors. Many think that the crime can just move around the corner once one street has become safe. According to Weisburd's research, though, areas around the newly safe area seem to get better as

well. Most of his research, which was observational, was conducted in Seattle, Washington. He did mention, though, that 50 percent of crime in New York takes place in street segments. Unfortunately, in this high-percentage case, tremendous stability in crime over time seems to be occurring, especially in the popular juvenile hangout locations—malls, movie theatres, skate parks and so on.

Social prevention in hot spots was another topic discussed. This type of prevention suggests the importance of informal social controls in doing something about crime at criminal hot spots. It also provides an opportunity to lower the scale of social intervention while making

such intervention feasible. Also, social characteristics of places (e.g. collective efficiency socio-economic statuses) are important risk and protective factors related to crime at hot spots.

The key risk and protective factors for chronic hot spots were quite surprising. People with physical disorders have a 25.634 percent chance, while high-risk juveniles possess a 2.218 percent odds ratio.

People seemed very impressed with the lecture overall, and the vast array of free food was a plus as well. "I did not think of it the way he put it, I guess. And so it was kind of neat to see a whole different kind of view on an issue like that," Chris Burke, freshman, criminal justice, Lindenwood University, said.

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## UMSL community connects with Ireland at traditional Irish singing event

**HALI FLINTRIP**  
News Editor

Thursday, February 10, world-champion and traditional Irish singer Niall Wall conducted a presentation on Sean Nos for University of Missouri - St. Louis' faculty, students and eager guests. Sponsored by the Smurfit-Stone Professorship in Irish studies and held in the music building on south campus, the event included a discussion on the style of traditional Irish music, subject matter and history, as well as the performance of traditional Sean Nos in a capella style.

Wall opened the event by explaining that the style of Sean Nos translates directly to "Old Style," or traditional. "It is always a capella," Wall said. "Some people have called it... singing without music, but [Sean Nos singers] would say that the singing is music. We would say accompaniment gets in the way." Sean Nos songs are almost always performed solo, without any other singers and no groups. According to National Geographic, Sean Nos are typically performed in the Irish language. Still, the style translates well to English, and many English speakers are already, unknowingly familiar with old-style Irish ballads.

Songs sung in the Sean Nos style can be thematically heavy or light. The traditional, time-tested

songs, performed by Wall, covered historical topics like the Irish rebellion and the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte. Wall said that many Sean Nos songs on political topics masked their meanings in order to keep those who sang them safe from repercussion. The songs could have served the purpose of reminding a very downtrodden yet patriotic population of their unity and commitment to the cause of Ireland. Many of these songs were sad.

The Sean Nos songs Wall performed with lighter themes included a love story. "Do not worry, this one has a happy ending," Wall said, he also sang a song about the topic of Irish whiskey. The event ended in a question-and-answer session.

Though the music was almost entirely unfamiliar to the audience, for whom solo a capella singing is almost certainly not the norm, each song received an adamant round of applause. Sean Nos music is relatable despite its unfamiliarity in sound. It is down-to-earth and contains messages that are easily relatable. Staying true to his craft and its importance, Wall, who is also a singing instructor, did not hesitate to recruit any individual interested in taking up this kind of singing. He put particular emphasis on the crafts need of a younger generation.

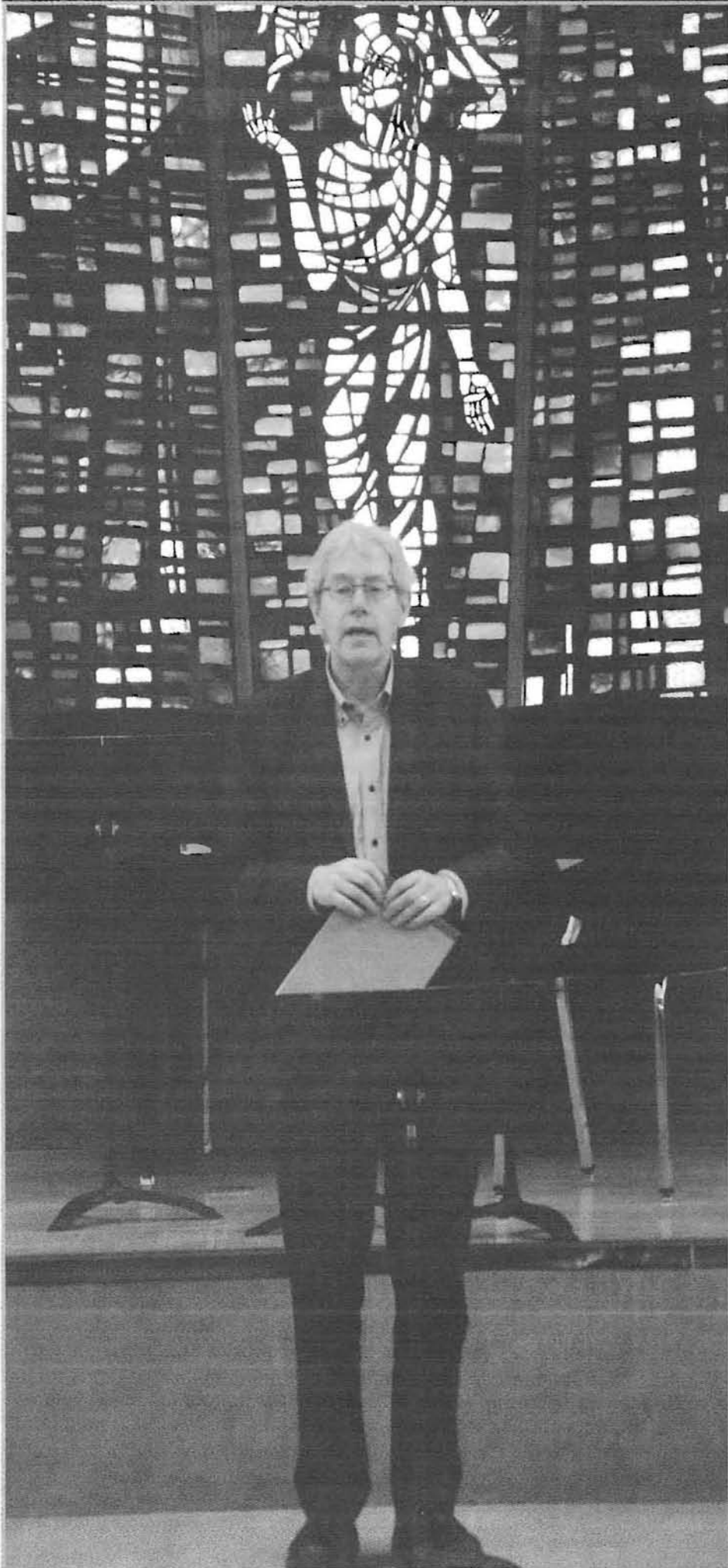
Dr. Eamonn Wall, the Smurfit - Stone Endowed

Professor of Irish studies at UMSL, was responsible for organizing the event. The mission of the Smurfit - Stone Irish Studies organization, Dr. Wall said, is to "make Irish culture and Irish-American culture available to UMSL students, faculty and the St. Louis community."

Dr. Wall planned for the Sean Nos singing event to be educational and enjoyable. He even asked a section of his English literature course to attend because he wants busy students who may not otherwise have the opportunity to experience on campus events or Irish culture to have an opportunity to attend.

Dr. Wall is from Ireland, and he finds that Irish cultural material has value for Americans. "Irish [cultural] material is central to American material... and 50 million Americans claim Irish heritage. Irish studies material is of a very high quality," he said.

"[Sean Nos singing] is the oldest traditional singing in Europe, and it still continues," Dr. Wall said. "For some people, it will be the first introduction to Irish singing or Irish music. For others who know a little bit about it, it will give them something new and something different, and for those who know a lot about Irish singing and Irish culture, it will be just a top rate performance for them to enjoy."



Dr. Eamonn Wall, professor of English and Irish studies, gives an introduction to his brother Niall Wall's recital.

NIKKI VAHLE / THE CURRENT

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# Hollywood images, southern realities: How "The Help" is unhelpful

**ALADEEN KLONOWSKI**  
Staff Writer

Can a "feel-good" movie or best-selling book really change a person's views on racism, or only sooth them into the false belief that things have gotten better since the period in which the movie or book is set? This issue and many others were discussed Wednesday, February 8 in the Student Government Association Chamber on the top floor of the Millennium Student Center on the University of Missouri - St. Louis' campus after three viewings of the 2012 Oscar-nominated motion picture "The Help." The viewings were offered to the student body between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., with a paneled discussion taking place around 7:30 p.m. The three-person pan-

el consisted of Kathleen Nigro, assistant teaching professor, English and gender studies, Ph.D.; Darryl Frierson, 2011 Black Weblog Award winner and graduate, Iowa State University who has degrees in history as well as journalism and mass communications and Angela Mitchell, a student with a master's degree of fine arts in creative writing and a recent recipient of the Riverfront Times Master Mind Award.

Why would "The Help" not be a success? After all, it is based on a best-selling novel, presents an opportunity for the showcasing of popular "Mad Men"-esque fashion, stars American sweetheart Emma Stone and puts frequent supporting actress Viola Davis in the forefront for the first time in her career. Hollywood expects a moviegoer

to be content as they leave the theater, but upon closer inspection at last Wednesday's event, some thought-provoking issues came up.

For a film to accurately portray any event or historical timeline to viewers, honesty is necessary. It is necessary to neither belittle nor improve the imagery of the characters and events in the film.

"They talk about it as a 'feel-good' movie and I think there is a certain amount of danger in that," Nigro said. "I think there is a certain amount of danger in ennobling the downtrodden. There is just as much danger in that as making someone look evil. It is just a danger that's made somebody seem to be without flaws."

Despite its disapproval of the direction that cinema is heading, the panel

came to the conclusion that Hollywood cannot be blamed entirely. They also defended media by declaring that society is provided with the entertainment that it wants and pays to see.

The panel discussed how Hollywood has a tendency to place people on pedestals and how this inhibits the viewer's ability to see that character as a real person and not a plot device. In movies about race, this problem manifests as the "Magical Negro," as Frierson called it. He explained that this is a phenomenon in movies where a black character shows up to help solve the problems that the white characters are having, but there is no character development for the black character. "Oh, they just appeared from somewhere," Frierson said. He amended that "The Help"

does not participate in this movie trope as much as movies such as "The Legend of Bagger Vance" and "The Family Man," but it still lurks in the subtext.

For awhile, the panel discussed movies with largely black ensembles and why such ensembles are not seen very often. This led to a few questions about what would have happened to the "The Help" if Skeeter, the white protagonist, was not the main focus.

As far as white stereotypes go, the panel discussed Celia as a "hooker with a heart of gold." Amongst her community of white housewives, Celia is deemed "white trash" and is ostracized because of her unglamorous upbringing and lifestyle choices. Is it possible that it is because of her poor relations that she is able to befriend

her hired maid, Minnie?

Chelesa Holden, senior, criminal justice, believes in the idea that this relationship between a white woman and her maid was made possible due to a mutual understanding of a world outside of Southern debutantes. An understanding such as this would have been a rarity in the timeframe "The Help" looks to accurately portray. However, she also believes that while this relationship made the movie better as a whole, it is far from the truth of the situation.

The panel closed with a discussion on how our society is afraid to talk about race. Frierson believes that we are who we are and that by not talking about race, we as a society are poisoning America. Race may be a sensitive subject, but honesty is necessary.

## St. Louis poets come out to honor black women at "Black Women Rock" event

**ASHLEY ATKINS**  
Features Editor

"I think that black history is the stepping stone of everything that makes this country so great. We invented everything from the traffic light to the super-soaker," Jerry Washington, audience member, said. "We are a beautiful culture, a culture that everybody wants to be a part of."

Thursday, February 9, the University Program Board at the University of Missouri - St. Louis hosted the university's first ever "Black Women Rock" event. Around 100 individuals, predominately women, flooded into the Pilot House for a night of music and spoken poetry from some of St. Louis' discovered and undiscovered talent.

With the entire month of February being dedicated to black history, the purpose of this particular event was to recognize the talent and importance of the black woman.

Audience member Jennifer James had heard about the show from one of its creators, Mari Carter, UPB president, who often "spits" at the Poor Souls Art Gallery in St. Louis.

"She announced that she was doing a show here at UMSL, so I decided to come and support and hear some new talent," James said. "This is a spin-off of Black Girls Rock. This is Black Women Rock so the same energy, finesse and creativity that went into that nationally syndicated show, I am expecting here tonight through spoken word."

St. Louis poet and hostess

of the night was Robia Fields a.k.a "Iggnyhte." Her own personal goal was to have a positive influence on the young women in the audience, something that she felt could be achieved through interaction. She proceeded to pick various girls throughout the audience and ask them, "Why do you rock?"

"I know why I rock, and clearly everybody can see why the poets up there rock, but why do you rock?" Fields said. "You are just as important as everybody else."

Surprisingly, the audience of college-educated women felt uncertain about the question, dodging their answers by crediting the event as a reason to act and feel fabulous. It was not until the older

women in the crowd broke their uncertainty with their announcements of achievement, many citing the academic advancement of their high-school-aged children. An accomplishment achieved in a single-parent household.

The program was set to get started with the first guest poet of the night, AJA La Starr. Her performance had to do with the fact that women use designer clothes to build up their own personal worth.

A young saxophonist had come to the event to entertain the women with his interpretation of Tevin Campbell's "Can We Talk." An St. Louis poet known as "Lightning" talked about the black women owning up to their sexiness, but doing so through respect. During

the open-mic portion of the program, Dre Sisk "Black Diamond," sophomore, St. Louis Community College-Flo Valley, expressed his problem with the word "b\*\*\*\*."

"I came out tonight because I am definitely a black woman who rocks," "Lightning" said. "I appreciate the recognition of all the communities and diversities at this school. Being able to focus on women for one night is beautiful." Andrea Neal, freshman, business, closed out the evening by singing Alicia Keys' "Superwoman" leaving the audience with the final message participants hoped would sum up the entire event.

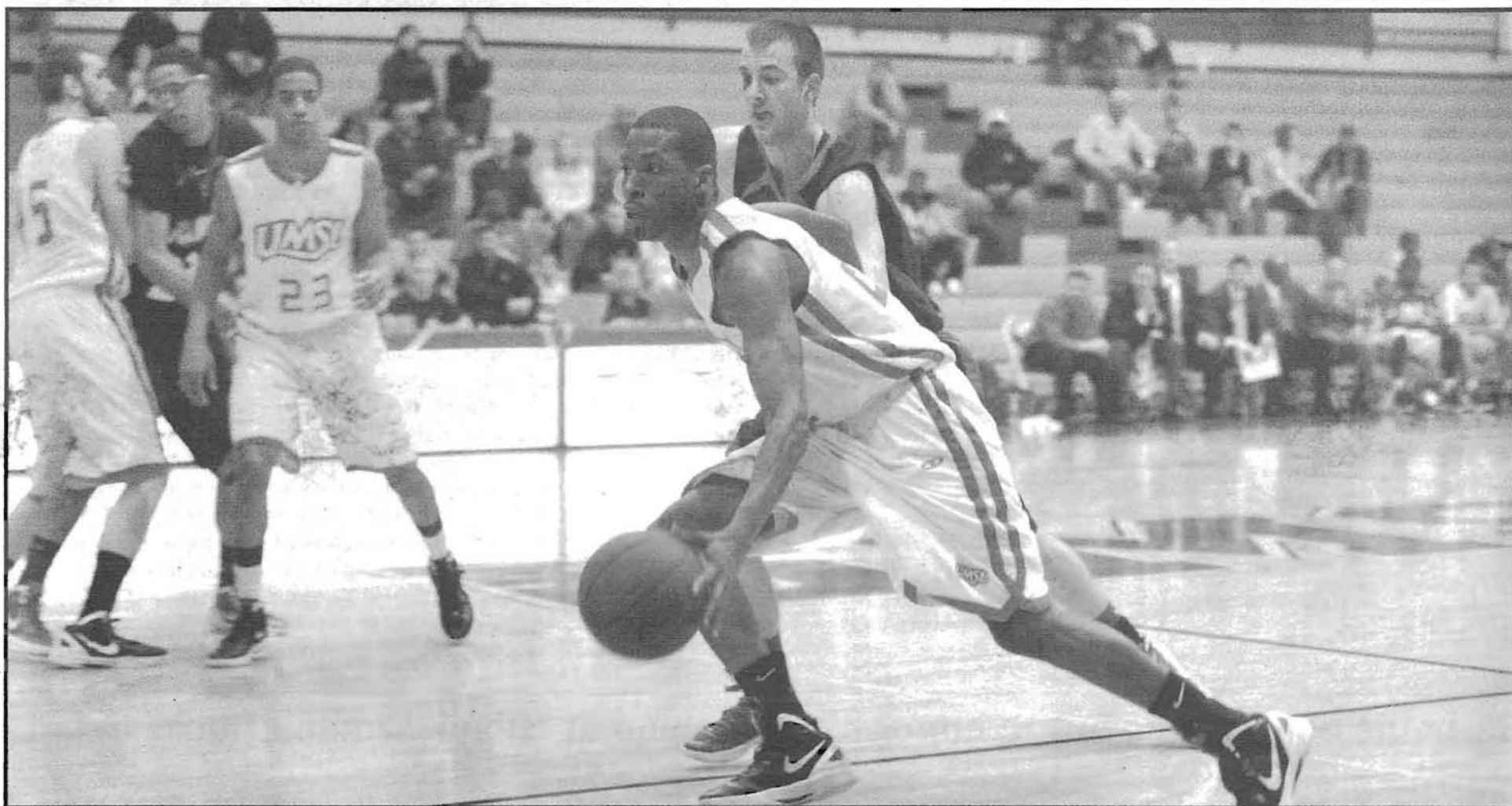
"Our goal was to honor black women for black history month. We wanted

people to come out and see that we actually put a lot of effort in to making a show about women in a positive way, maintaining the integrity of the show all the way through," Neal said.

For St. Louis poet and artist Louis Conphliction, the goal for the evening was to make sure that every woman in attendance walked out in a better mindset.

"I hope that every woman walked out of here feeling a little more secure, a little more comfortable and a little more happy with themselves. I do not know what my personal poetry gave them because I know that everybody perceives things differently, but I just hope that they felt better leaving than when they came in," Conphliction said.

# Sports



Justin Hightower, senior, communications, runs past Drury on Saturday, February 11, 2012.

JENNY MEAHAN / THE CURRENT

## Men's Basketball season heats up; Tritons stay hot

**OWEN SHROYER**  
Sports Editor

After a battle-tested University of Missouri - St. Louis men's basketball team went on the road to win two tough conference games, they came home to Chuck Smith court for two tough conference games. Playing at home was friendly to the Tritons, as approaching Thursday night's match-up against Missouri S&T, the Tritons had not lost at home this season (9-0).

Very early in the season, the Tritons played at Missouri S&T and won 79-70, in the beginning of their impressive ten-game win streak. Now, the Tritons looked to start their first

winning streak in nearly a month, as they have been trading wins and loses in their previous five games.

The first half of Thursday's game was back and forth, as well as being evenly-matched. Missouri S&T built the largest lead of the half with just less than five minutes to play when they led by nine. UMSL rallied in the final four minutes to gain a one-point advantage at halftime.

Missouri S&T reacted by coming out in the second half and making the first three field goals, all three-pointers, and adding a free-throw to make their own ten-point run and gain back their nine-point advantage.

Missouri S&T continued to make the game tough for the Tritons, and had five double-digit leads in the second half. They once led by eleven points. Again, the Tritons found themselves down by nine points right around the five-minute mark and again they rallied back. Aareon Smith, freshman, undecided, saw his role increase in recent games and stepped up big in this game with four clutch points late. Joshua McCoy, junior, communications, and Troy Long, senior, liberal studies, both went four-for-four from the line in the closing minute to help the Tritons tie the game and sent it to overtime.

In the overtime, UMSL

was able to jump out to a quick four-point lead, but it was short lived, and Missouri S&T closed out the Tritons on their home court 83-79, handing the Tritons their first home loss of the season.

With no time to hang their heads, the Tritons played again Saturday night at home against Drury, who they also beat early on in the season.

The Tritons seemed driven and hungry to get back in the win column, leading the entire first half of this matchup and even coming out of the break and continuing to dominate the game. In fact, the Tritons led the entire game until just under two minutes remained, when Drury tied it

at 61, then again at 63, to send the Tritons to their second straight overtime game.

UMSL was not be bullied or beaten this time. They came out strong and sent a message on their home court, drumming Drury by eleven points in overtime, en route to an 82-71 victory. Troy Long again led the Tritons in scoring with 24 points, as Charlie Woods, junior, psychology, was grinding it out on both ends with 15 rebounds, eleven points, three blocks and two steals.

Pulling off the victory against Drury was huge and kept the Tritons in sole possession of first place in the west division. At 16-7 overall and 11-4 in confer-

ence (most conference wins in Tritons history), the Tritons control their own destiny in their division and will win it for the first time if they win the conference.

The men's basketball team has three games remaining: February 16 at home against Quincy (UMSL pack the stands night), February 18 at Illinois Springfield, and then the regular season finale at home against in town rival Maryville for senior night. Quincy and Illinois Springfield are both only one game behind the Tritons in conference, so these games will be hard fought no doubt. The team needs our support as they close out the program's greatest season ever.

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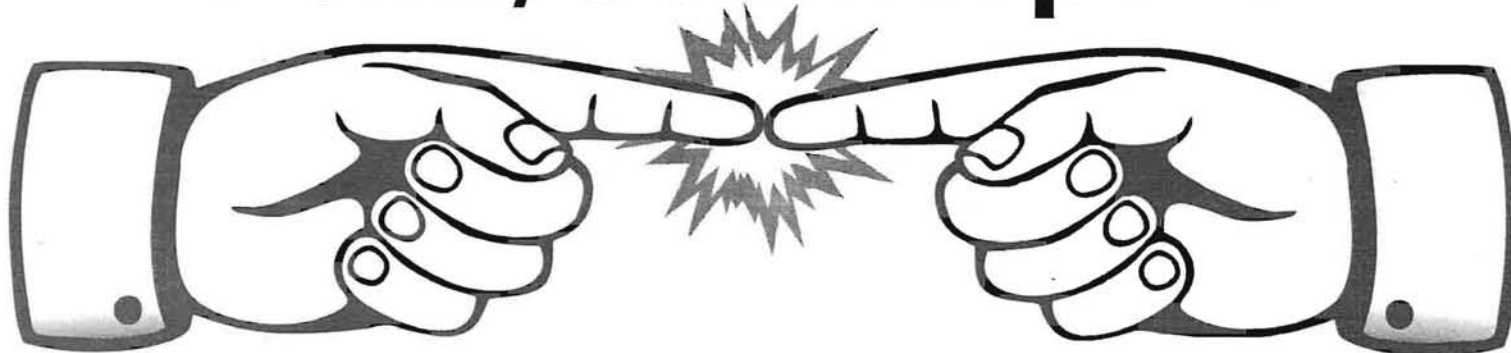
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# Point/Counterpoint



*Is solitary confinement an appropriate way to punish criminals?*

## Solitary confinement is not a humane form of punishment

Some might ask, "What is solitary confinement?" According to the online source Wikipedia, it is a special form of imprisonment in which a prisoner is isolated from any human contact, though often with the exception of members of the prison staff. It is sometimes employed as a form of punishment beyond incarceration and has been cited as an additional measure of protection from the criminal. It is also used in instances where a criminal has violated prison regulations, as a form of protective custody or to implement a suicide watch.

Why should we talk about it or have a debate on solitary confinement? It is because of the effects the method has on our prisoners. According to MSNBC online news source, Stephen Slevin, 57, was arrested in August 2005 in New Mexico's Dona Ana county. He was charged with aggravated driving while under the influence and possession of a stolen vehicle, although Slevin maintains the car was lent to him by a friend. Slevin was placed in solitary confinement for two years. He suffered from depression prior to his conviction and claims he was denied medical care while in solitary confinement. He was also de-

nied dental care, which forced him to pull out his own tooth.

He was not given a trial. He never saw a judge during his confinement. He was entitled to one hour per day out of his cell, but according to his lawyer, Slevin was often not even granted that minimal amount of freedom.

Slevin now suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. This is a mental health condition that is triggered by a terrifying event. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. Recently, he was awarded \$22 million dollars in damages for enduring inhumane conditions in the Dona Ana county jail.

While in solitary confinement, there are no group activities—no work, no educational opportunities, no communal eating, no sports and no attempts at rehabilitation. Showers are only allowed during the one hour that those in solitary confinement are not forced to remain in their cells, and even then, they cannot take them every day. Prisoners are confined to a concrete cell in which they never see grass, trees, earth or any part of the natural world. Imagine not seeing sunlight, day after day.

Think about how difficult it is just being confined at your job for eight hours; at the end of your shift you are running to get out of that environment.

Are we giving too much power to the guards? The neglect and mistreatment of prisoners occurs because prisons have grown beyond the ability to control the environment, and guards have implemented harsh and unreasonable tactics to maintain control over such a population. Ignorance is no excuse. Many in the system have adopted a "take care of business attitude" that allows staff to do what they want without proper supervision to rein them in.

Solitary confinement has so many negative effects on prisoners. It can cause depression; prisoners can become physically and psychologically destructive. According to the National Electronic Library for Health, many have committed suicide.

Criminals should be punished in a humane way. Prisoners are still citizens and are still entitled to their basic rights. They have a right to interact with others and not be deprived of regular contact. We are all creatures that enjoy social interaction. Prisoners should be rehabilitated and not just subjected to inhumane punishments.

## Despite bad reputation, solitary confinement is needed

Solitary confinement is necessary for certain prisoners. It preserves the safety and quality of life for all prison residents and is not intolerably cruel when used properly and with consideration for the health of the confined.

The issue of solitary confinement has received new media attention and enhanced scrutiny since former prisoner Stephen Slevin sued after being held in solitary confinement. He was recently awarded \$22 million dollars in damages for the health and mental problems that he claimed to suffer from this treatment. Slevin was reportedly denied access to proper healthcare, including dental and mental healthcare, and kept in a cell with nothing but unnatural light for 23 hours a day.

Shockingly, media portrayals of solitary confinement have made the punishment seem still worse. An episode of "Law and Order: Criminal Intent" portrays a detective going undercover into prison where he is taken into solitary confinement and experiences nothing short of torture. Strapped to a tiny metal table in a sterile room, held too close to the ceiling and its florescent lighting—which was a technique used by prison guards to de-

prive the detective of sleep—he did not receive food or water. Finally, when he begged for water, his voice parched and strained, a guard splashed some over his face, providing him with mere drops to swallow.

With representations of solitary confinement like that being shown to the general public, it is no wonder that many call it an inhumane and uncalled-for practice. However, there is no reason to believe that fictional cases like the one mentioned above, or extreme cases like Slevin's, are anywhere close to the norm.

The concept of solitary confinement is familiar, but is rarely mentioned in current events media coverage. And no news is good news; if a notable number of solitary confinement cases resulted in the dangerous neglect that Slevin described, we would hear about it more often. We do not, so while Slevin's case was horrifying and ought not to be repeated, the prison system can now move on and continue with the practice of solitary confinement.

Solitary confinement, like any policy, fails when used incorrectly, as it appears to have been in Slevin's case. Still, there is nothing inherently inhumane about the practice. It has a definite role within prisons

as a method of punishment for poorly behaved prisoners. More importantly, it is a way to ensure the safety of other well-behaved inmates and prison staff. If a prisoner behaves dangerously, obviously they must be removed from the group.

What more humane form of punishment can be assigned to someone who is already in prison? Generally, inmates' amenities consist only of necessities like food, shelter and hygiene. Social contact is one of the only pleasantries in prisoners' lives that could be removed without doing dangerous, tangible damage to health. Solitary confinement seems reasonable when examined within the context in which it is practiced.

It is understandably difficult to reconcile the idea of locking someone up without social contact with our society's standards of morality and humane treatment. But these are prisoners, not naughty kindergartners! Nobody deserves the torture-reminiscent treatment Slevin reported, but ultimately, solitary confinement does not inherently include such treatment. Solitary confinement contributes to the overall safety of prisons, which improves the conditions for the majority of inmates; it is a necessary practice in an undesirable situation.



# Opinions

## OUR OPINION

### Schools should be more honest about historical figures, not less

"History is the torch that is meant to illuminate the past, to guard us against the repetition of our mistakes of other days. We cannot join in the rewriting of history to make it conform to our comfort and convenience." The preceding quote from Claude G. Bowers' "The U.S. and the Spanish Civil War" begins the Change.org petition that seeks to fight against the rewriting of American history in textbooks. As of early January, there are those in Tennessee who are seeking not to illuminate that past, but to place it in a dark corner in favor of more flattering topics.

Tea Party activists in Tennessee are pushing for major rewrites when it comes to how textbooks present the founding fathers; as of present time, current representations are viewed by the group as being biased portrayals. Changes would include downplaying the founding fathers involvement with slavery and putting less focus on the mistreatment of Native Americans. All mention of the trans-Atlantic slave trade would be replaced with "Atlantic triangular trade."

"The thing we need to focus on about the founders is that, given the social structure of their time, they were revolutionaries who brought liberty into a world where it hadn't existed, to everybody — not all equally instantly — and it was their progress that we need to look at," Hal Rounds, a spokesman for the organization, said. This

stance is merely an opinion, one that students may come to on their own after learning the facts. Telling students what to think about what they learn eliminates the need for critical thinking — something that is already a problem in our school systems. It's not for anyone but the students themselves to decide how they should view the founding fathers and their actions. While it can be said that the founding fathers were acting in accordance with the common views of the time period in which they lived, going as far as saying that because of that, their actions are justifiable makes the leap from historical fact to opinion based on fact.

What are Tea Party activists so afraid of? We as a society should not shy away from the ugly side of history. Eliminating certain topics from textbooks prevents students from conducting an open dialogue both about history and those who created it. The founding fathers were not flawless; what historical figures were? Presenting historical figures as the imperfect human beings that they were only aids in changing them from cardboard figures to actual human beings that students can more readily empathize with, sharpening the important life-skill of acknowledging that very few people, no matter what they do in their lives, are wholly good or bad. Despite what they did contribute to the forming of our nation, the founding fathers were not im-

mune to making mistakes, both in their actions and what they allowed to happen. What conclusions students come to about the men who helped build this country is a mental exercise that they are more than capable of conducting for themselves.

"Slavery is of course portrayed in the textbooks nowadays I'm sure as a totally negative thing. Had there not been slavery in the South, the economy would've fallen," Tennessee Tea Party member Brian Rieck. This is an example of the Tea Party mentality: if the facts don't fit their vision of what is or what should be, they will simply present their own opinions as "facts" instead. If students choose to view the founding fathers negatively because they owned slaves, that is their right. No group should have so much power in what conclusions students come to after learning the reality of American history, but this power and influence is exactly what the Tea Party is seeking by altering both textbooks and teaching methods.

When all is said is done, there's only one reasonable course of action: present students with the facts and let them come to whatever conclusions they may.

*Unsigned editorials reflect the majority viewpoint of The Current's Editorial Board: Matthew Poposky, Jeremy Zschau, Janaca Scherer, Ashley Atkins, Hali Flintrop, Cate Marquis, Sharon Pruitt, Owen Shroyer, and Nikki Vahl.*

## JANACA'S TOP FIVE

### eBooks are the new wave of the future; are you on board?

It is more than obvious that, in the 21st century, we are living in a digital world. Anything can be downloaded off the Internet, products from across the world can be shipped to your doorstep and a wealth of knowledge is available from a variety of different websites.

The next big craze in the digital world is eBooks. An entire library that is available to download in an instant, anytime, anywhere... Now that is taking "instant access" to a whole new level.

#### 1) No bulky, heavy books to carry around.

That's right. No need to carry around a 400-page book; a Kindle weighs less than a notebook and about the same size. A single eReader can carry up to 1,400 books, no matter their length or size, on one tiny little device. No more back pain due to textbooks that all seem to weigh 40 pounds apiece. An eReader can easily fit into a purse or back pocket. It's possible to finish one book and start another without having to move more than a couple fingers.

#### 2) Instant access?

These days, it is possible to download a book, magazine or newspaper at any time. Never again will a library or bookstore be closed, because a digital store never closes. It is possible to download a book at midnight on the day it comes out. You can even preorder it and it will be "delivered" directly to the eReader when it becomes available. Lines are virtually nonexistent because it's possible to down-

load a book while lounging in pajamas and drinking a cup of coffee. Is the Metro running late? Why not peruse the digital bookstore and download a couple new books while waiting?

#### 3) What college student doesn't love cheaper textbooks?

Who wouldn't mind paying a cheaper price for the same book? More and more textbooks are being offered in a digital format and for cheaper prices. Publishers don't have to pay for the printing of the book or shipping costs and that gets reflected in the book price. eBooks can be over 50 percent off the regular shelf price. Classics (like "Alice in Wonderland", "Pride and Prejudice" and "Little Women") are all free thanks to Project Gutenberg. This is a priceless resource for any students who have to take English classes. Now, instead of having to go out and buy a huge stack of overpriced books that they need to drag with them to each class every semester, they can get all their requisite reading material for free.

#### 4) The variety of reading devices is ridiculous.

There are iPads, iPods and iPhones; there are Kindles and Nooks. Phones can download the Kindle app, and any tablet can be converted into a reader. The screen size of an eReader can range from a mere 6 inches to a whopping 9.7 inches. Text size can be changed to be miniscule or to take up the entire screen. eReaders feature black and white screens, color screens, E-Ink screens



Janaca Scherer

or LED screens. Need Internet access? Would you prefer WiFi or 3G? You can even watch movies on the latest eReaders; you can play apps on others. eReaders aren't just digital books anymore. They are so much more. Only have limited funds? Buy an eReader for as low as \$70. There is an eReader out there for everyone.

#### 5) Printing fewer books is better for the environment.

Who doesn't love going green? It means no more wasted trees or paper. It means no pollution from the printing factory. It means no gas spent delivering books across the country. In this day and age, it is time to start taking a stand against the wasteful ways of yesterday. Buying books digitally makes it possible to make a difference. Imagine if everyone had some sort of eReader. There would be no need to print off journal articles for research. Not even leisure reading would be in a physical form. All of this can be done on one tiny eReader.

*Janaca Scherer is the Design Editor and a columnist for The Current.*

What do you think?  
www.thecurrent-online.com.

## SCIENCE MATTERS

# Chocolate, red wine, roses and 'broken heart' syndrome

Who says love has nothing to do with science? In honor of Valentine's Day, let us take a look at a sampler of scientific and health-related tidbits related to popular Valentine's Day conventions.

## Look into your Valentine's eyes:

Pupils dilate when we are interested. If you are wondering whether your sweetheart shares your passionate feelings, his or her eyes can tell you. Studies show that our pupils dilate when we feel strong emotions, not just in response to lighting conditions. Some scientists are using measurements of pupil diameter in studies of mental activity.

## Don't buy roses, or the ecological downside of Valentine's Day:

If you want to buy your sweetheart roses, the worst day to do that is on Valentine's Day. They are expensive and often picked over as well but on top of that, they can be bad for the environment. 70 percent of roses sold in European supermarkets come from Kenya, and British ecologist Dr. David Harper of the Department of Biology at the University of Leicester, Great Britain, has noted a devastating impact on Lake Naivasha in Kenya as a result. Harper has spent 30 years doing wetlands research in the Lake Naivasha area. In a 2009 publication, Harper noted that Kenyan farms, by growing roses by environmentally unsustainable methods were depleting and degrading the lake. Rose venders were encouraged to promote sustainably grown roses and since then, efforts have been underway

in Kenya to move to more sustainable methods. Roses are costly, but other flowers are still romantic and sexy - they are, after all, the sexual parts of plants.

## Give your Valentine chocolate but only the dark kind:

Real chocolate has lots of healthy compounds, and dark chocolate has more of the ingredients that make that so. Resveratrol and cocoa flavonoids, which are found in dark chocolate with a cocoa content of 70 percent or higher, are the most notable of these compounds. Resveratrol has been linked to lower blood sugar and other health benefits. A 2009 study published in the *Journal of Proteome Research* linked eating dark chocolate reduced levels of stress hormones in highly-stressed people.

## Red, red wine:

Forget champagne and go for the red wine for Valentine's. Like cocoa, red wine has resveratrol. A June, 2007 study in *Harvard Men's Health Watch* found that men who drink four to seven glasses of red wine every week are 52 percent less likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer. The same study noted that red wine appeared to protect against advanced or aggressive cancers. Moderate alcohol consumption, including that of red wine, has been linked to lower risk of heart attack, stroke and diabetes. Moreover, an antioxidant component in red wine may help protect men against lung cancer, a researcher at Kaiser Permanente found in a 2008 study.

## "Broken heart" syndrome:



Cate Marquis

Cardiologists have described a real medical condition called "broken heart" syndrome. Also known as stress cardiomyopathy, it can be caused by highly stressful life events, like a romantic breakup, the death of a spouse, job loss or extreme anger. Symptoms are similar to those of a heart attack but most suffers of "broken heart" syndrome usually mend with time and medical intervention.

In a few cases, the syndrome is more serious. Researchers in a 2009 study looked at a group of 70 patients diagnosed with "broken heart" syndrome. The patients arrived at the hospital with heart attack-like symptoms. About 66 percent of them had experienced a very stressful life event shortly before coming to the hospital. 20 percent required emergency treatment to keep them alive but all survived and made a full recovery.

So this Valentine's Day, toast with red wine, nibble dark chocolates, look deep into your sweetheart's eyes and don't get your heart broken. You'll be healthier (and happier) for it.

*Cate Marquis is the Arts and Entertainment Editor and a columnist for The Current.*

## MAD WORLD

# From the mouths of babes: hate and fear not limited to adults

Most 14-year-olds want money for their birthdays. Some want lavish parties or an extended curfew - and then there are some who, instead of a card full of cash or a new iPad, want those who are different from themselves to be refused the same rights.

For her birthday, a teenager in Maryland asked state legislators to vote "no" on marriage equality. A homeschooled teen named Sarah stood before Maryland's Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and delivered a speech where she talked about how unfortunate the children of gay parents are and that marriage equality will lead to legislators redefining words with reckless abandon.

Sarah's plea began as such: "Today is my 14th birthday and it would be the best birthday present ever if you would vote 'no' on gay marriage. I really feel bad for the kids who have two parents who are the same gender. Even though some kids feel like it's fine, they have no idea what kind of wonderful experiences they miss out on." What exactly are the children of gay parents missing out on? She never clarified, but it must be said that heterosexual parents are in no way fundamentally better or more likely to raise children in a healthy environment. The idea that heterosexual couples are somehow more wholesome completely ignores the many instances of horrific parenting by those who are mothers and fathers in the "traditional" sense.

"I don't want any more kids

to get confused about what's right and okay. I really don't want to grow up in a world where marriage isn't such a special thing anymore." The idea of heterosexual marriage being sacred has been used often as a reason why same-sex couples should not be allowed to marry. However, there is no way to ensure that marriage remains "special." Are we as a society going to start voting on which straight couples are allowed to get married, just in case two people get married whom we don't think should?

Anyone can get married for any reason. Just because the marriage involves two heterosexual adults doesn't mean it's somehow a shining example of the sanctity of marriage. Unless those who use this defense are going to start picketing drunken Vegas weddings between straight people who barely know each other, bemoaning the declining sanctity of marriage when it comes to same-sex couples is hypocritical.

Sarah continues on, declaring it is "rather scary to think that when I grow up, the legislator or the court can change the definition of any word they want. If they can change the definition of marriage, then they could change the definition of any word." Redefining old (some would say archaic) definitions is a common practice. As society changes and evolves the words we use change and evolve in their meaning as well - as they should.

"People have the choice to be gay, but I don't want to



Sharon Pruitt

be affected by their choice," Sarah said near the end of her speech. But how is she affected by the decision of two complete strangers? If two people making a decision that she does not agree with upsets her that much then it's safe to say that she's in for a lifetime of headaches and unending stress. Rather than try to change and control the actions and personal decisions of others, why not attempt to grow your own understanding when it comes to lifestyle choices that differ from your own? Hopefully, kids like Sarah will be exposed to experiences as they get older that will broaden their minds and their acceptance of others.

The speech may have been delivered by a 14-year-old girl, but it brings to light a troubling viewpoint that is held by many adults in this country. It is fear and ignorance that often accompanies the fight against same-sex marriage; that fear and ignorance should not be allowed to stand in the way of granting equal civil rights to all.

*Sharon Pruitt is the Opinions Editor and a columnist for The Current.*

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**  
Let us know at [www.thecurrent-online.com](http://www.thecurrent-online.com)

# Horoscopes

**CURRENT HOROSCOPES** by The Inane Collective  
altered by:  
**The Ramblings of Procreating Monkeys**

## AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)

Valentine's Day is here and you have yet to plan anything extravagant with your partner. Perhaps this year is an opportunity to simply enjoy each others' company without distractions.

## PISCES (FEB. 20 - MARCH 20)

Pay no attention to the simplicity allowed Aquarius this year. It is time for you to really shine - take your partner out on their dream date this Valentine's Day. Make all necessary arrangements now.

## ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Never give up individuality. You need a partner who understands your uniqueness as a person. When you find that partner, hold on tight. It is a rare person that accepts and embraces differences as readily as similarities.

## TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Is "forever alone" a meme which you are familiar with? If not, this year may be a year in which you find yourself feeling a certain kinship with it. If you have a partner, be careful - they are on edge right now.

## GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

That old flame trying to find their way back into your heart has certainly been tenacious as of late. It may be time to give them a second chance. You haven't noticed them? Oops.

## CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 22)

That restaurant your partner wants to go to is just a tad too expensive, the gift they have been begging for really does not suit their style and you cannot give up your entire day. Learn to compromise now, before it's too late.

## LEO (JULY 23 - AUG. 21)

Courage is something you have been lacking as of late. That cutie in your class/office/yoga class has noticed you, as well, so what's the hold up? Buck up. Talk to them and ask them out already.

## VIRGO (AUG. 22 - SEPT. 23)

You have decided that this year, you are going to fly solo for Valentine's Day. If you do have a partner, they want to spend time with family anyway, so everything will work out. Grab some chips, start up the electronics, and relax.

## LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)

Keep in mind this Valentine's Day that attempting to balance the hearts of others is not an act smiled upon by the general public. Love is not a game and must be treated with respect to flourish.

## SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)

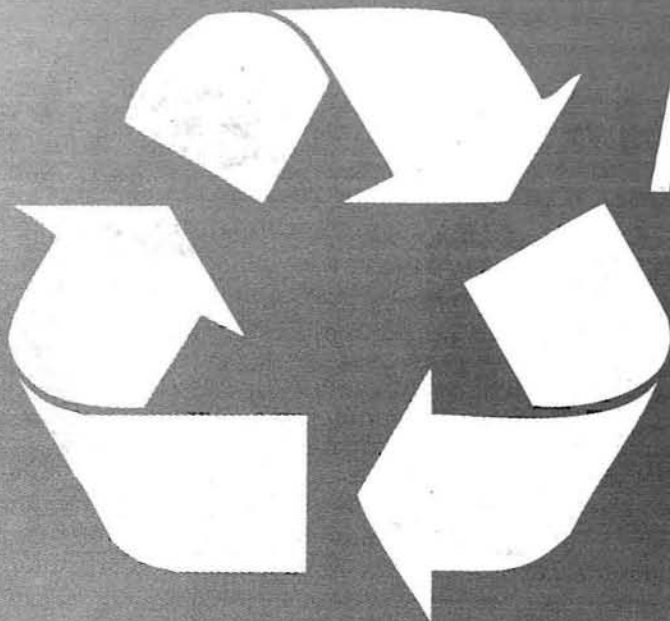
Love comes in a wide variety of forms. While Valentine's Day is known as a holiday to celebrate love with a partner, keep in mind that Valentines can come in all forms. Seek out your Valentine, whether it be romantic or not.

## SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)

Give in. The past may be daunting and a source of constant doubt, but you cannot allow it to crush the future. Accept it, acknowledge it and move on to the future with arms open to accept love.

## CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)

Your new sugar momma/daddy has been taking excellent care of your needs thus far. However, they have already informed you that they do not acknowledge Valentine's Day. Sucks to be you.



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

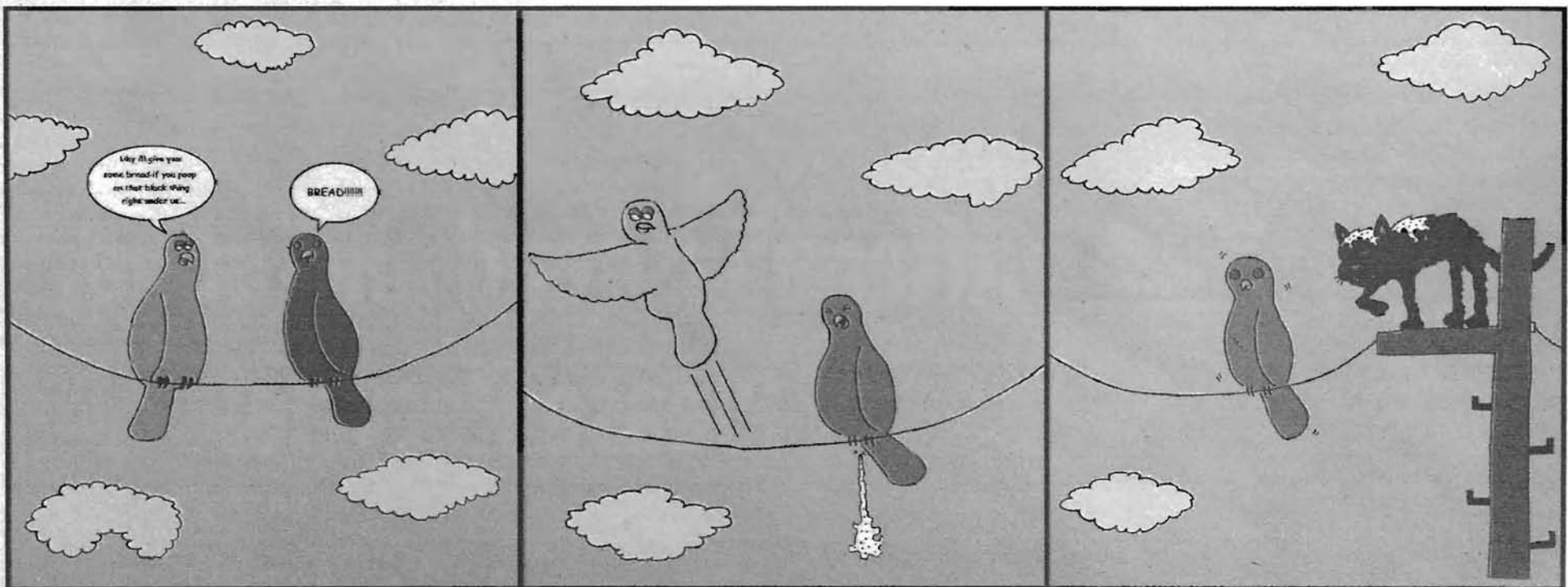
**-Your friends at The Current**

# Comics

## Simply Beagle by Karlee Sellars



## Pidgiots by Stefano Ragonesi



**How are we doing?**

Let us know at

[www.thecurrent-online.com](http://www.thecurrent-online.com)