ELECTIONS 2008:
DON'T SCREW THIS UP

Get to know the presidential class of '08. You might be stuck with one of them for 8 years.

INSIDE:
A Guide to Beating Procrastination
Behind the Scenes with UD's Nude Models
Who Saved the Electric Car?
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FROM THE EDITORS

Wallace McKelvey

With the presidential elections ten short months away, it’s important to get acquainted with the people who will be leading our weary nation through the next four (or eight) years. The time to make important decisions about your priorities is now. By the time you read this humble plea, the Delaware primaries (Feb. 5th) will be over and the horse race will be nearing its conclusion.

It is time to ask the big questions of our future leaders: questions about Iraq, Afghanistan, terrorism, torture, our uncertain economy, health care, student loans, and immigration. It doesn’t matter whether their answers are “right.” What’s right for me may not be right for you. Just make sure they have an answer and the answer makes sense to you.

No matter where you reside on the political spectrum – left, right, middle, or somewhere out in the ether – try to spend at least as much time this year considering your options for president as you do your deodorant. And don’t let our sarcasm deflate your rosy view of politicians too much. We are but college students, jaded at the ripe old age of 20.

Finally, thanks to all of the talented people who worked on this issue of Deconstruction. We’re also thankful for the RSO allocations board and its continued faith in our magazine, as well as the journalism professors who’ve supported and mentored us.

Amy Saltzman

It’s a new issue of DEconstruction, and I’m feeling the love of St. Valentine in the air. I debated whether I should use this small space to whore myself out through a personal ad, but instead I decided to save my desperation for the fateful fourteenth. In all seriousness, I have nothing about which to be complaining. I think this issue is a spectacular way to welcome the spring semester. Through the efforts of a creative, kick ass staff we have compiled some great reads for the general student public. Our last issue was really the first time this magazine has been truly innovative, where we’ve pushed ourselves to make a deeper impact on student consciousness.

I’d like to think of the magazine as a mixed bag of tricks. Humor, politics, pop culture, campus news…it’s all here, packaged conveniently in what a few friends of mine have referred to as a “perfect bathroom read.” My job isn’t to dictate to you where you should indulge yourself with the pleasantries of this issue; as long as you’re reading and enjoying, I couldn’t ask for anything more. And be sure to let us know if there’re any suggestions you have for the magazine, if you’d like to be a part of it, or if you’d like to let us know what you thought of this issue. We take it all in with a humble heart. So please read, laugh, ponder, share, enjoy.
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Check Out the DEconstruction Website and Blog at:
http://copland.udel.edu/stu-org/DeconMag/
http://deconstruction.wordpress.com/
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2008 Presidential Election

by Evie Hayman, Wallace McKelvey, and Amy Saltzman

The Issues:

Border Fence: A proposal that includes building a 2,000-mile-long fence on the United States and Mexican border to keep out illegal immigrants. (www.globalsecurity.org)

Death Penalty: The ability of the court to sentence someone to death as a punishment for violent crimes.

Iraq War Withdrawal: The complete removal of American involvement in the war in Iraq.

Kyoto Protocol: A treaty created in 1997 which requires nations that sign to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. As of June this past year, 175 countries have signed the Protocol, but the United States has not taken part. (www.eoearth.org)

No Child Left Behind: An act passed in 2001 by President Bush with intentions to increase school accountability on various local levels, give more choices to parents and students in low-achievement schools, allow more flexibility with federal education funds and to focus on reading. (www.ed.gov/nclb)

Roe v. Wade: A court case in the 1970’s which determined that laws barring abortion are unconstitutional. This case gave women the right to have abortions legally. (www.law.cornell.edu)

Same-Sex Civil Unions: The equivalent of marriage in heterosexual couples, couples in a civil union would get all or most of the legal rights and privileges that married couples receive.

Stem Cell Research: The use of human embryonic stem cells to test new medicines and to experiment with the creation of cell-based therapies. Cell-based therapies could lead to a cure for certain diseases and injuries where people are in need of replacement cells or tissues. (www.stemcells.nih.gov)

Universal Health Care: A program currently used in some European countries where the government provides health care to all of its citizens, regardless of whether the individual can afford it. (www.wikipedia.org)
The following is a listing of the major candidates for the 2008 Presidential nomination. We’ve picked several highly debated issues and noted whether the candidates either support or oppose the issue. Yes denotes a candidate’s support and no denotes a candidate’s opposition. All information, (unless otherwise denoted), was obtained from www.2decide.com, www.votegopher.com and the candidates’ respective websites. For more information about the candidate’s stances on these and other issues, visit the websites denoted in each entry.

Where does each candidate stand on these issues? Read on...

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EDITORS’ NOTE: Because of the fast-paced nature of politics in primary season, a number of the candidates represented in the following articles about the elections have since withdrawn from the race. For the most up-to-date information, periodically check the candidates’ websites or nytimes.com.
Presidential speed dating
Who will you choose?

Hillary Rodham Clinton, Senator of New York, www.hillaryclinton.com
People do crazy things freshman year, like taking the “walk of shame,” vomiting in public… or leading the Young Republican club. Guess which one this rebellious lioness did. However, this fembot doesn’t change all her opinions so easily. Hillary is known for her loyalty: to universal health care, women’s rights, and her baby’s daddy, Bill. But don’t mistake loyalty for weakness, this stone cold fox shows no emotion unless votes are at stake. Like a fine wine, Hillary gets better with age and experience.

John Edwards is the true underdog. Despite a $29.5 million net worth, he describes himself as the “people’s candidate” and has likened himself to Seabiscuit. He’s built a platform on universal health care and ending poverty, having clawed his way from the textile mill to the Senate and, possibly, the presidency. In 2004, Edwards played Barney to John Kerry’s Fred, but will he be willing to play Bonnie to Hillary Clinton’s Clyde?

Dennis Kucinich, Congressman of Ohio, www.dennis4president.com
This former badass mayor of Cleveland has made his mark living life on the edge. Not only was he targeted by the Cleveland mafia (perhaps suggesting his current stance against handgun ownership) but he’s also survived being unemployed and virtually homeless, with a reported income of $38 on his 1982 income tax return. But don’t pity this pint-sized player, he’s currently married to a red-headed beauty 31 years his junior. Also, he’s always one for fairness. Demanding that the votes be recounted in the New Hampshire primary to make sure that “100 percent of the voters had 100 percent of their votes counted,” Kucinich was reassured knowing that he received 3,912 votes…or, 1.36% of the total.

Barack Obama, Senator of Illinois, www.barackobama.com
This human melting pot is more than just a tall, lean hunk of man. Obama has won fans ranging from young voters to Edwards’ former compadre, John Kerry. But no hard feelings; this grassroots campaign can do no wrong in the eyes of college students. After all, Obama has admitted to using alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine during his teenage years. He also credits poker as a guilty pleasure. With this party hard attitude, we have a feeling many shots will be dedicated to Obama in the upcoming months.
9/11 is arguably the best thing that’s ever happened to this Big Apple playboy. Actually, wait, it might play second fiddle compared to receiving an honorary knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his work in handling the national crisis. No, that doesn’t make him “Sir Rudolph,” but he did get a hefty medal. His personal life has seen better days – failed marriage to a second cousin, multiple extramarital affairs and estranged relationships with his children – we can only hope his commitment to presidency is a bit more…monogamous.

Mike Huckabee, Former Governor of Arkansas, www.mikehuckabee.com
Should you choose Huckabee, be prepared to rock out Saturday night and cleanse your soul Sunday morning. As the bass player for rock band Capitol Offense, he’s opened for Willie Nelson and REO Speedwagon. Don’t expect the usual rock star antics, such as cocaine use or pre-marital sex. He’s a good Baptist minister who still supports the war in Iraq, opposes Darwin, and has recruited Stephen Colbert as his running mate.

John McCain has lived the kind of dangerous life that Schwarzenegger can only dream of. He endured six years of torture in North Vietnam after being shot down by the Viet Cong. A supporter of the Iraq War, he is the only presidential candidate to have a son serving there. McCain has called himself “a wiseass.” This year he was rebuked on the floor of the House of Representatives after saying he had picked out a gift for Jon Stewart in Baghdad: “a little IED [improvised explosive device] to put on your desk.” Some people just can’t take a joke.

Don’t try pegging this free spirit to any platform. Although running as a Republican, this libertarian opposes some conservative favorites such as the Patriot Act and the War on Drugs. He loves his personal space too, encouraging the abolishment of most federal agencies, including the Federal Reserve, which basically controls our entire economy. Not one to mingle with other nations, Paul is also hesitant to get involved with foreign entanglements. Sounds like someone doesn’t like to share.

Mitt Romney, Former Governor of Massachusetts, www.mittromney.com
Don’t let his MySpace fool you, this conservative poster child isn’t as boring as he looks. If you don’t believe us, ask 75,202 New Hampshire voters. And did we mention he’s a Mormon? Although he has tried to keep it a secret, the press just loves polygamy. Co-Editor-in-Chief Amy thinks Romney is a G(randfather)ILF. What more endorsement do you need?

Fred Thompson, Former Senator of Tennessee, www.fred08.com
He’s got a face made for television…at least Law & Order thinks so. While this Hollywood glamazon has been struggling in the polls, he sticks close to his conservative roots, questioning the reality of human affects on global warming and remaining in favor of the war in Iraq. He’s also got a sense of humor…about his wife. Referring to his favorite possession being his trophy wife, Thompson really knows how to romance the ladies. Plus, he’s all over IMDb. Who doesn’t love a moviestar?
PICTURE it -- November 2008, and it is the Pennsylvania Avenue High School presidential elections. The campaign is heated with a fire of controversies from the war in Iraq to federal health care. In this high school, it isn’t just about the most popular – it’s also about the most qualified, the best-ivy league educated, the best funded, and the most pious. In this campaign, where the stakes are high and the winner gets control of the Free World, it begs the question – where do our candidates sit on the social totem pole?

**Republicans**

Mike Huckabee

*The Fat Kid*

As a child, this Baptist minister, turned Arkansas Governor, rolled more pork into his face than he does into his state budgets. This “plus-sized” candidate, hailing from the tiny town of Hope (also Bill Clinton’s hometown), lost over 110 lbs. by shying away from foods that did not exist 100 years ago. We can only hope that he does not draw his national policy from the same era as his dietary palette.

Rudy Giuliani

*The Hall Monitor*

Everyone knows him - that kid that seems to be there just in the nick of time to catch the bad guys when they try to walk from the library to the bathroom without a hall pass. As one of the most respected mayors in the history of New York City, Giuliani cracked down on the city’s illegal narcotics distribution, brought down the infamous “Five Families” Italian mafia ring, and became the “Mayor of America” after his courageous leadership during the 9/11 attacks. It’s no wonder his campaign platform is hell-bent on ridding the world of terrorists.
At his alma mater, Episcopal High, the Arizona Senator earned his varsity letters in wrestling. Years later, he earned a Purple Heart for his excellent military service and time spent as a prisoner-of-war during the Vietnam Conflict. Time will only tell if he earns the tile of 44th President of the United States.

John McCain
The Jock

This Massachusetts Governor was the valedictorian of his class at Brigham Young University and graduated cum laude with dual degrees, J.D. and M.B.A., from Harvard University. The Governor is also a devout Mormon and does not drink nor smoke and saved his abstinence until marriage. I get it - that’s how he had all that time to study.

Mitt Romney
The Nerd

Fred Thompson
The Drama Club Geek

You may know Thompson from his five season stint as New York City District Attorney, Arthur Branch, from the TV series Law & Order, but Thompson had been previously famous with Tennesseans for almost a decade – as their governor. The Governor received his J.D. from Vanderbilt and also diversified his resume as a private attorney and lobbyist. Talk about art imitating life.
This Texas Representative has been married to his first and only wife, Carol Wells Paul, for fifty years and is the proud papa of five children. Paul is also a certified obstetrician/gynecologist who has practiced throughout his political career. I think it’s safe to say that if he continues his practice throughout his presidency, he will have been inside more women than John F. Kennedy and Bill Clinton did in theirs - combined. No small feat there.

Joe Biden

This private attorney, turned Delaware Senator, has no big gimmicks up his sleeves. He does not hail from an Ivy League school (he earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of Delaware and his law degree from Widener University) and has never been the leader of a “swing” state. Nor does he come to the plate with a stellar voting record. But he is consistent; he is currently serving his sixth term as senator, making his the sixth-longest running term in the state. Quite impressive, Joe! – (not).

Hilary Clinton

Clinton, New York’s first female senator, has been bucking the system forever. At Wellesley College, Clinton was the first student ever to speak at commencement. She was the first female partner at Rose Law Firm. She was both the First Lady of Arkansas and the United States. She was also the first First lady ever to be subpoenaed before a Federal Grand Jury during the Whitewater scandal. I think first female President of the United States would be fitting. I just don’t know how well she will take to being the second President Clinton.
John Edwards
The Underdog
North Carolina Senator John Edwards has had to overcome a lot of adversity in his life. Edwards came from humble beginnings in North Carolina. He lost his teenage son, Wade, in 1996 to a car accident. He was almost eclipsed in his 1998 Senatorial run by Republican Launch Faircloth. He lost to President Bush and Dick Cheney during his vice presidential run with John Kerry in the 2004 elections. His wife, Elizabeth, announced she had breast cancer shortly after he announced his presidential candidacy. Luckily for Edwards, what Americans like more than a consistent winner is a comeback kid.

Dennis Kucinich
The Runt
Towering in on the campaign trail at a slender 5'5”, Ohio Representative Dennis Kucinich credits his bony frame to his adamant vegan lifestyle. Kucinich was a third-string quarterback on his high school football team and went on to be the youngest mayor of Cleveland at age 31. During his rocky years in politics, Kucinich was one of the few democrats to hold a pro-life stance and to vote in favor of an investigation into President Clinton’s impeachment during the Lewinsky scandal. I guess some candidates enjoy being in the minority.

Barack Obama
The Token Guy
Illinois Senator Barack Obama is the son of a Kenyan father and an American mother who split most of his childhood between Polynesian Hawaii and Indonesian Jakarta. Socially, Obama also walked the line of diversity. He was an exceptional student, attending both Columbia and Harvard University, but admitted to experimenting with marijuana, cocaine, and alcohol. He also has a diverse religious background; he attended and Islam-influenced grammar school, and, as an adult, is active in his Christian faith. If the presidential elections had a minority quota to fill, Senator Obama could be the one-man diversity band.
There’s something about having a passion that makes an individual glow. Whether it is music, art, history, politics, sports, or even knitting, when that person is in their comfort zone, you know it.

Last year, The Princeton Review declared that the University of Delaware was the fourth most apathetic school in the nation. This may or may not be accurate, but regardless, those who care deeply about politics and events happening around the world can be found right in our own backyard.

At a recent College Republicans meeting, I saw passion with an entirely new light.

As a Democrat, I have to admit that I felt slightly uncomfortable walking into the room on the second floor of Gore Hall. Surrounded by about 20 people who would cringe if they saw my “Barack Obama ‘08” t-shirt, I knew the meeting might be awkward for me. I decided to sit on the sidelines and observe the night’s events, hoping that no one could smell my natural pro-choice and anti-war scent.

The meeting kicked off with all the members reciting the pledge of allegiance. “Alright, I love America. I can totally handle this,” I thought to myself. After the pledge, the president, Lara Rausch, and vice president, Bill Rivers, went over the normal information given out at the beginning of every meeting.
It was after this routine that the real fun began.

Rivers transformed the meeting into a discussion forum with a provocative question about the war in Iraq. He asked his fellow Republicans if they thought the 2008 candidates should discuss the war in debates and during campaign stops or if the Republican party might benefit more if the issue was placed on the back burner with hopes that the situation might get better as the election season continues.

If I were to walk around Trabant on a weekday around noon and ask random students this exact question, they would panic and wrack their brains to think of an answer. But when asked at the meeting, no less than ten people raised their hands with an opinion on the matter.

Most of the students at the meeting agreed that as a political strategy, it might be best for the candidates to let the war issue fade out of public view while tackling more domestic issues that citizens of the United States must face on a daily basis.

The decisions made in this particular discussion are irrelevant. What really matters is that this group of students cares enough about the 2008 elections and their political party to come out on a Tuesday night and sit through a meeting when they could be at home watching “Dancing with the Stars” or some other ridiculous reality show.

And on Wednesday nights when the Democrats have their meetings, is it a miracle that any one from the university shows up when students could be watching a marathon of “America’s Next Top Model” or taking part in ‘Wasted Wednesday’? I don’t think it’s a miracle at all.

UD may not have the most politically savvy student body in the nation. But regardless of what the majority of the campus might do, there will always be meetings taking place and campaigns to volunteer for and you can bet that students will always be there to knock on doors and hand out pamphlets.

A friend of mine, and a student at the university, once told me that, aside from Christmas, his favorite holiday is Election Day.

Maybe before The Princeton Review printed their listings, they should have participated in a literature drop at 10 o’clock on a Saturday morning or stayed up all night before Election Day putting up signs with the 20 or 30 students from each party who do this every year. If they had done these things, they would have seen that along with beer-filled weekends and lazy afternoons, a decent amount of students from the university actually devote their lives to politics.

Apathetic? Maybe in some respects the student body is apathetic, but upon attending one College Republicans or Democrats meeting, I think you’ll find that those few students who have a passion for politics are out there picketing for their favorite candidates with more zeal than even the perkiest sorority girl.
The electric-powered GM EV1 was put out to pasture in 2001, but its descendents are mounting a comeback.

Who Saved the Electric Car?  

by Wallace McKelvey

THE electric car has been the redheaded stepchild of the automotive industry for the past century. Like a family outcast, the major car manufacturers have relegated it to the kiddy table. Until now. Once the playground of garage tinkerers and adventurous millionaire (George Clooney, I'm looking at you), the electric car has entered the public consciousness in a big way.

The electric car has global warming and the 2006 documentary Who Killed the Electric Car? to thank for some of its newfound popularity. With all the drama of a Greek tragedy, the documentary traced the rise and fall of General Motors' EVI, the first practical mass-produced plug-in electric vehicle. At the time, GM was only complying to a 1990 California mandate requiring the big Detroit automakers to build zero emissions vehicles. The EV1 could run 70 to 80 miles before having to be recharged and was powered by the electric grid – literally plugged into wall outlets.

Unfortunately, the EV1 became a case study in the auto industry's reluctance to abandon their gas-guzzling internal combustion engine. The little red automobile was too much of a good thing for the environment and too much of a bad thing for the oil industry. In 2001, the mandate that birthed the EV1 was repealed. Claiming the EV1 wasn't profitable and despite long waiting lists of customers ready to purchase the next car to come off the production line, GM axed their pluggable portal to the future.

Filling the electric void left by GM, dozens of upstart entrepreneurs and major automakers have stepped up with hybrid, hydrogen, and electric cars of their own. Some are available now, as long as you have a Paris Hilton-size trust fund. A few of them should be arriving in a car dealership near you in the next few years at a more reasonable price. And one of them is being tested right here at UD.
The New Wave of Plug-ins

Commuter Cars Tango

This sleek little gremlin has found a home in George Clooney’s garage, and it only cost him a cool $108,000. For the math inclined, that's 18,000 calzones at D.P. Dough. Built in Spokane, Washington by an upstart company, this Chinese-food-box-on-wheels has a range of 60 to 80 miles on a single charge and blistering top speed of 150 mph. The fact that it uses a lead-acid battery should be a cause for concern to environmentalists. However, with approximately 200 of the one-seaters on the road, it's not as big a threat as the 590 million CO2-releasing conventional vehicles worldwide.

Tesla Roadster

Even though its top speed is "only" 130 mph, the Roadster looks a lot faster than the Tango. It's understandable to mistake the Roadster for the latest Porsche, since the lithium-ion battery-powered convertible shares its bold curves (and the shape of the Porsche logo). Like the Tango, the Roadster also has celebrity proponents, including Arnold Schwarzenegger. You won't see the Governor cruising around Napa Valley in a Tesla, however, until 2008.

Chevrolet Volt

Although it is technically a hybrid, Chevy is calling the Volt an electric vehicle with a "range extender." It has a range of 40 miles – a round trip between Newark to Wilmington – when run on electricity alone. An internal combustion engine, run on E85 ethanol fuel, operates a generator to recharge the battery and extend the Volt's range to 640 miles (or from Newark to Charleston, SC). Using fuel, the vehicle has 150 miles per gallon, a top speed of 120 mph, and a 0 to 60 acceleration of 8 seconds. Unveiled this January, the Volt will be in a Chevy dealership near you in 2010 with a target price of around $20,000.
This “car without an engine” is quickly becoming a car without a future. Introduced in 2002, the Hy-wire has no combustion or hydraulics. Everything is controlled electronically and its driver controls resemble a videogame joystick more than a steering column. It is a system employed in fighter jets and some commercial airplanes, but hasn’t been used in cars before the Hy-wire. The car is based on a “skateboard” (Bart Simpson, eat your heart out), where all the electrical components are housed, to which the passenger compartment is bolted. Not much has been heard about the Hy-wire since 2003 and GM has since moved onto faster, more conventional models.

**Chevrolet Sequel**

A design with all the personality of a moon rock, the Chevy Sequel has been undergoing consumer trials and celebrity test-drives (including Anthony Kiedis of the Red Hot Chili Peppers) since its introduction in 2005. It utilizes a fuel cell that combines hydrogen with oxygen to produce electricity. Remember experimenting with electrolysis in high school chemistry class? The fuel cell works on the same principals, with the only exhaust being good ol’ H2O. The SUV has a range of 300 miles between fill-ups and accelerates from 0 to 60 in ten seconds. The Sequel’s future is uncertain, but the innovative fuel cell has been transplanted into the pre-existing Chevy Equinox for mass-production in 2008.

**Ford Airstream**

This space capsule or time machine is actually a conversion van, unveiled at the Detroit Auto Show this January. It utilizes a HySeries Drive battery, which can operate on either all-electric or electric-and-hydrogen power. More fuel efficient than the NASA Space Shuttle, its estimated fuel efficiency rating is 41 mpg and a range of 280 miles before refueling or recharging.
What is UD doing?

Parked in the driveway of an unassuming bungalow in Newark is a car that could forever change the relationship between consumers and their vehicles. This “cash-back vehicle” is the eBox, an electric car with vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology.

Like most plug-in electric vehicles, the eBox is literally plugged into an electric outlet to charge its approximately 4000 lithium ion batteries. When fully charged, the car has a range of 120 highway and 150 city miles. Running off the same batteries that power your laptop, the eBox can accelerate 0 to 60 mph in 7 seconds and reach a top speed of 95 mph.

The eBox differs from its electric brethren by making the flow of electricity a two-way street.

Graduate student Amardeep Dhanju explained that V2G cars can be charged at night, when energy prices are low and there isn’t a major demand for electricity. During the day, when the cars aren’t being charged and energy demand is high, utility companies can communicate with the vehicle and take energy as needed to fulfill the needs of the electric grid.

“The cars don’t generate energy,” he said. “But the owner can get money back for providing backup energy to the grid.”

Vehicle owners will have the final say in how much electricity is taken from their cars, said graduate student Scott Baker.

“If they need to go 50 miles, they’ll be able to tell their car to leave them with enough battery power for the trip,” Baker said.

The university currently has one V2G-enabled eBox, he said. A second eBox will arrive this April and there are plans to convert the university’s fuel cell bus to V2G. The long-term goal is for the university to oversee the operation a few hundred of V2G-enabled cars.

AC Propulsion, a California-based company, converts gasoline-powered cars into fully electric vehicles with V2G technology, producing

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approximately 100 each year, Baker said.

Dhanju said the eBox was originally a Toyota Scion xB, but its internal combustion engine was replaced with an electric motor and battery pack at a cost of approximately $50,000.

“To reduce that cost, you could make $3000 a year connected to the grid depending on the market you’re in,” he said. “That’s decent cash back for anyone spending above and beyond the regular car price.

“Electric cars will remain expensive for some time,” Dhanju added. “But once they have an assembly line production, cost will go down considerably.”

Baker said V2G technology could revolutionize drivers’ expectations for their vehicles.

“This is the first time that a consumer can expect their car to have the ability to pay for itself,” he said.

In order for V2G to become widespread, new business models need to be developed and an infrastructure installed to support the technology.

Dhanju said that PJM, the grid operator for Delaware and the mid-Atlantic region, will begin purchasing power from V2G owners once the cars are able to transfer 3 megawatts of power to the grid. An estimated 300 cars would have to be running before PJM could commit to the system.

He said this could include fleet managers, who operate a few hundred vehicles.

“There will be an aggregator,” Dhanju said, “to control all the transactions between the grid manager and car owners.”

Baker imagined aggregators operating charging stations in parking lots and electric charging stations replacing gas stations along the highways.

In order to get this infrastructure off the ground, the Mid-Atlantic Grid Interactive Car (MAGIC) consortium has been organized, he said. It includes partners in the academics, utilities, manufacturing, and infrastructure.

Dhanju said the ultimate goal is a carbon-free society, but a strong political policy impetus would be needed for rapid change.

“We may be carbon-free in 15 or 20 years, but that’s not a desirable window given the urgency of climate change,” he said.

Baker said adding V2G technology to electric vehicles wouldn’t mean redesigning the electric cars. It would amount to adding one box and upgrading the electric cable.

“I don’t see any reason why it can’t be incorporated into electric vehicles when they become mass-produced,” he said. “A simple addition opens up a whole world of change, from business models to how individuals interact with their vehicles.

“I can’t wait to get one of these cars in my own driveway. Now we need to convince big auto manufacturers that other Americans will to.”

For more information, go to UDEL.EDU/V2G

How V2G Works

Energy from traditional sources enters the grid and travels across power lines to your house.

When the demand for energy is high, the grid manager pulls electricity from your vehicle, reimbursing you.

Aggregators act as mini-generators, managing the transactions between multiple vehicles and the grid.

eBox is charged at your house.
O
n October 21st I received a call from my boyfriend at the University of Richmond. It turns out it’s a very good thing he’s going to Richmond, instead of Pepperdine, where he had fully intended to go until the last minute. He’d called to say that Pepperdine was burning.

Luckily, the students and faculty of Pepperdine were all evacuated, one small part of what became the largest evacuation in California history: over 900,000 people displaced overall. The damage wreaked by the fires on the state was incredible. Twenty-three separate fires made up the larger disaster, and they destroyed over 500,000 acres and created property damage upwards of a billion dollars. At least 7 people died and 61 firefighters were injured as of October 24th.

Fires don’t just happen, of course. Every flame starts with a spark. In this case, the fires were started by arson, downed power lines, illegal camping fires, and a variety of accidents including sparking guns and one overturned semi-trailer. The Buckweed Fire, which destroyed 21 homes, was blamed entirely on a young boy playing with matches. He wasn’t charged for this incident, because these kinds of mistakes happen all the time and he had no malicious intent. What made these common events especially dangerous that particular week, October 21st through the 25th, was environmental conditions. The weather was particularly hot due to a drought devastating the region, and the Santa Ana winds carried the flames at 85 miles per hour during their fastest period. Last year, there were actually 3,000 more fires than this year in California, but they destroyed 110,000 less acres. This is because fighting fires becomes exponentially more difficult the faster they spread, and the overall dryness of the region meant there were no barriers to the fires devastation.

Some green groups are contributing these environmental factors to global warming. The climate change that brought about Hurricane Katrina, a case of too much water, may have also brought about the drought that began the fire, a case of too little. The trend has been observed in great detail over the past hundred years, and the EPA provides a possible explanation for this phenomenon: as temperatures increase, the ice caps melt, and snowfall can occur more often and melt more rapidly. This adds more precipitation to already wet areas. However, overall temperature increase also makes hot and dry areas hotter and drier, such as California during this disaster. The warming might just be occurring naturally, but it is compounded by the effect of the sun’s rays being trapped inside the atmosphere which is made thicker by CO2, SO2, and NOX emissions.

Whether or not the climate change is being brought about predominately by natural or man-made causes, the increased greenhouse gases in the air changes precipitation patterns and will only get worse in the coming decades. Pollution can only increase with the industrialization of developing countries, and the 2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide and 200,000 tons of methane and nitrous oxide the San Francisco Chronicle claims the wildfires put into the air can’t help. The Daily Green says that’s equivalent to the pollution from 440,000 cars in a year, but only half a percent of California’s total yearly emissions.

It looks increasingly like we might be caught in a vicious cycle of bad weather: too much rain then too little; and each disaster contributing to the likelihood of the next one. California Governor Schwarzenegger claims on his website that his Blue Ribbon Task Force is committed to improving fire response time, and that he has increased funding to $259 million for new equipment and firefighters. Are Californians safe in his capable hands? Maybe, but we should all buy some fire and flood insurance… just in case.
ON the surface, we seem to have entered a new era of unprecedented environmental concern. Constant discussion and publicity of global warming has brought the gravity of the problem close to home. Noting the increased awareness amongst consumers about the lack of environmental sustainability of our current practices, many companies have sought ways to shrink their ecological footprints. From Fiji Water to Intel, a vast array of companies have joined the movement toward “going green,” and even more continue to jump on the bandwagon.

We’re surrounded by messages from companies and organizations touting their newfound environmental awareness. But what do companies really mean when they talk about “going green?” The main problem may be that the concept of “going green” applies to practically any effort, no matter how small or improperly motivated, aimed at lessening a detrimental environmental impact. For example, a company may publicize a decision to “go green,” but the scope of the effort could be disappointingly small. Perhaps the headquarters building has become more efficient in its energy usage, and has installed less wasteful practices. This sounds good to consumers, but the fact of the matter may be that the one building represents only a tiny fraction of the company’s output, so it seems a bit strange for the company to be placing such an emphasis on its progress towards “going green.”

In this case, as in many others, the term “going green” has been stretched and abused to manipulate consumers. A few studies have shown that companies “go green” primarily with an eye on reputation, efficiency, and consumer interest. Because companies have recognized a new focus on the health of our environment, they are often willing to go to the lengths required to call their efforts “green.” Instead of looking at the actual benefits for the environment, most companies concentrate on their profit margins. A common instance of this may be found in the increased attention toward alternative energy sources. The demand
for wind power has reached a record high. A shift toward renewable energy sources may fill some consumers with optimism about a company’s efforts, but we must recognize that change does not necessarily signify environmental concern. It may simply be profitable for a company to switch to wind power, in terms of efficiency and publicity.

It is up to consumers to educate themselves, and to realize that companies publicizing that they are “going green” demand investigation. An environmentally concerned consumer of bottled water may want to research Fiji Water’s carefully planned new policy that will make the company “carbon negative.” The company seems to have covered all bases, from transportation and sales to forest preservation, in order to make sure that it will go beyond reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. Ironically, the relatively small company’s comprehensive plan brings a bigger issue into the picture: the industry itself promotes environmentally harmful consumer behaviors. In order to manufacture a one liter plastic bottle, 6.74 liters of water are contaminated. To transport that bottle from China to Fiji and then to the United States uses .243 kilograms of fossil fuels. Additionally, the company cannot prevent individuals from drinking their bottled water and not recycling the plastic.

Before taking for granted that companies are “going green,” consumers should look at their own habits. Shouldn’t a truly environmentally aware consumer avoid the purchase of any type of bottled water? Think about the amount of plastic that goes into our country’s fifteen billion dollar bottled-water industry. Proclaimed environmental progress in any of these companies should not clear the conscience of consumers who should be avoiding the purchase of bottled water altogether, and choosing other options such as tap water instead.

Clearly, our attempts to slow the destruction of our environment are flawed. The profit motives of companies and a lack of understanding on the part of consumers destroy much of our potential progress. While we should appreciate the little progress that has occurred, regardless of companies’ motivations, we must recognize that we have a long way to go, and that consumers have more responsibility than merely choosing goods produced by companies that have “gone green.” In addressing environmental concerns, it is our duty to be inquisitive, questioning companies’ practices as well as our own.
Don't Hate, Appreciate

by Erica Florentine

The other day I overheard my roommates talking. “He’s from Jersey? Ew...,” they said. I wanted to run up to them and shout, “HELLOOO! I’m from Jersey!” It takes a lot of self-control to deal with comments like this, and if you’re from New Jersey, I’m sure you know what I mean. My hometown is in dirty Jerz, and evidently because of this I’m completely disgusting.

When I meet someone who isn’t from New Jersey, the look of disappointment on their face when I pompously announce my hometown is uncanny. I get the “Oh gross, are you serious?” look. It’s annoying, but I often find myself alone in this battle. A lot of my friends at UD aren’t from my state, and frankly, I really don’t think they get it. I don’t gel my hair, glue on long fake nails and pack my face with makeup like non-Jersey folk would suspect of me. My outfit of choice is a sundress and flip-flops and no, I did not meet my first boyfriend at Hunka Bunka teen night. I’m just your average girl who doesn’t like to pump gas, so, please, give me a break.

Maybe no one understands except for those of us fortunate enough to actually be from the “arm-pit of the country”. Yes, smoky pollution fills the air in parts of Newark, and, yes, guidos swarm the beaches of Seaside Heights hunting for babes. And, maybe Camden was just voted the fifth most dangerous city in the nation, but that doesn’t mean all of Jersey is like that. What about us from Central Jersey? Those who actually live at the beach – not the “shore”. We aren’t “bennies” and we don’t spend our free-time in 24-hour diners eating “hoagies”. We’re just regular people.

I’m from New Jersey and I’m proud of it. Not overly, in your face, proud. I just like to call it home. My town is neither filthy nor trashy. It’s actually a lovely place with a clean beach, dazzling homes and a main street filled with adorable little shops. I’m very lucky to have all of that surrounding me everyday. I just wish out-of-staters could realize it.

On an average day in the summer, my friends and I live like we’re on vacation. We wake up late, get an iced coffee and hit the beach. We plop our chairs in our regular spot on the beautiful sand and tan all day long. We go out to dinner, go home, get ready, and then brew some cocktails. Yea, it’s your perfect life, I know.

Some people say, “We’ve got great clubs in Jersey.” Let’s get something straight. Though this may come as a shock to some, every night in New Jersey is not filled with fist pumping and strobe lights. We have normal restaurants and movie theaters and malls all filled with ordinary people.

What was seen on MTV’s “True Life: I’m from the Jersey Shore” is not a good representation of life in my state. That idiot Tommy portrays a thick accented club-goer who is macking on girls and sporting wife beaters. It makes New Jersey look horrible, and just for that I’m going to apply for the show now with the title being, “True Life: I Hate Jersey Shore Tommy”.

Sign onto Facebook and search New Jersey groups and you’ll find a so many it’ll make your head spin, but recently I came across one that gave me a good laugh. “I hate girls who think they are the shit because they’re from New Jersey.” The group picture is repulsive, but the group itself is a riot. I mean, lets get real. New Jersey girls really ARE the shit. New Jersey people in general are the shit. So please everyone, stop hatin’.
TO DO...
- laundry
- biology lab report
- buy milk & beer
- Deconstruction article about procrastination
A GUIDE TO...
BEATING "ACCIDENTAL" PROCRASTINATION
by LAMAR GIBSON

Procrastination, the scourge of all college students, seems to spread through campuses faster than the common cold. It has stopped carefully planned study sessions, caused lab assignments to be started at midnight and defused research papers that may have held the answer to world peace. However, there is a major difference between those students who are professional slackers (no offense) and thrive on all-nighters versus others who attempt to beat deadlines a week in advance but are still subject to temptation from time to time. This “accidental procrastination” really shows up in the last weeks before finals. As a matter of fact I needed to ask for an extension just to write this article! So, here’s the DEcon guide on how to beat that pesky procrastination:

SUNDAY, 1 - 6 P.M.

Three letters, N-F-L! Everyone knows that this is a wash. At best, you’ll look over a couple of notes from class for your exam on Friday, open and close a Word document several times in an attempt to start your 5 page paper due Thursday, IM friends and lounge around your friend’s dorm room favorite team (Eagles, Giants, Jets, Pats, Ravens, etc.) play.

SUNDAY, 7 P.M.

Okay, supposing that the Sunday night game is a dud, you have some time before you call it a night. Grab your laptop; any books you need, and head to your favorite study spot. (If you don’t have a favorite study spot by the time finals roll around, I can’t help you.) Make sure that you STAY AWAY from Wikipedia while studying!! If not you’ll wind up having spent three hours minimum looking up South Park trivia, the latest entry about Stephen Colbert and his candidacy, and inevitably, Star Wars characters from all six movies.

SUNDAY, 10 P.M.

You didn’t listen, did you? That’s okay. You’ll get ‘em tomorrow champ.
SUNDAY, 10 P.M.
Now that you’re done with class, head back to your room, pull out the planner and get some serious work done. Only stop for bathroom breaks and dinner with your pals.

MONDAY, 3 P.M.
Now that you’re done with class, head back to your room, pull out the planner and get some serious work done. Only stop for bathroom breaks and dinner with your pals.

MONDAY, 8 P.M.
Now that you understand the first two pages of notes for your Anthro exam and have an entire page knocked out for that paper (even though its double spaced), feel free to relax, (Monday Night Football maybe?) and hang out with your friends. Remember to wake up early to knock out another page on your paper and dinner with your pals.

TUESDAY, 11 A.M.
So much for waking up early, huh? You actually turned off both of your alarms and still managed to go back to sleep. In fact, you barely made it to class on time. It’s a shame too, considering you have a meeting tonight from 6-7pm and another at 8 o’clock.

TUESDAY, 9:22 P.M.
It’s pretty difficult to write a paper while flipping back and forth from “House” and “Dancing with The Stars” isn’t it? Not to mention the IM conversation you’re having with that awkward hook-up from over the weekend. Tell the creeper, “Peace”, turn off the boob tube and get to work!

TUESDAY, 11:22 P.M.
Another page and a half done and your eyes are twitching from looking at a flickering computer screen for two hours.

WEDNESDAY, 4 P.M.
You’re in a great mood. After going for a run for the first time in a couple weeks, you’ve just left Trabant after grabbing some late lunch and you’re heading back to your room. You’re already game-planning the rest of the night (including that paper due tomorrow) when you bump into a friend you have been meaning to catch up with. No worries though, it’ll be a short conversation…right?
WEDNESDAY, 6:35 P.M.

FUCK!! Now that each of you have recounted your recent life stories to each other, you have to hustle home and get this damn paper over with. You see three other friends on the way but don’t even stop to say, “Hey”. That’s okay; now that you’ve brushed them off they’ll start some rumor about you behind your back. Kiss those friendships goodbye.

WEDNESDAY, 8:17 P.M.

Sweet! Paper’s done and you still have enough time to head out and celebrate. Can somebody say “Wasted Wednesday”?

THURSDAY, 9 P.M.

You’ve been studying off and on for three hours and feel like you have a good handle on the test material. But right when you’re about to quadruple-check yourself, you get a text from that particularly cute friend of a friend that you partied with last night. “Do u wanna watch a movie?” Movie, yeaaaah, right. Oh decisions, decisions.

FRIDAY, 12:30 P.M.

Well, it’s the big day. Stay focused; don’t daydream about last night or the potential weekend fun. Remember what you studied, follow directions, and above all: READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY!! Godspeed and I’ll catch you at that house party on Cleveland tonight!

There you have it, a guide to beat a bad case of the “accidentals”. Hopefully you cited your references in the proper format (which reminds me…) and you filled in the bubbles correctly for that exam. Keep studying hard, and make sure you have time to relax!!
NOT ones to be labeled typical, the English rock band Radiohead made a landmark decision in allowing fans to actually choose the price of their latest album, In Rainbows. While reports are varied as to the actual success of the album, this move should be of no surprise to Radiohead fans around the world.

Radiohead has never been just an average band. The five member group hailing from Oxfordshire has had a unique sound since the beginning and has always been a step ahead of trends. The first album that brought the band fame primarily in the United States was Pablo Honey but a follow-up album Ok Computer garnered success with experimentation of previously unexplored electronic.

However one of the most memorable albums now is Kid A which many modern critics and music enthusiasts claim to be a soundtrack to the horrific events of 9/11. Similar to playing Dark Side of the Moon backwards to “The Wizard of Oz”, there is an uncanny resemblance of the events that took place on that fateful day and the synthesized nature of the album. Some of lyrics express the consequences the Western World may face from past decisions. Even the pamphlet art depicts towers burning and a ruined New York City.

Needless to say, Radiohead is a band that has generated a lot of interest and is revolutionary in their material and delivery. It is no wonder the band decided to make the potentially fruitless decision in allowing fans to name their price. According to comScore Inc. the band is making an average of $6.00 on the album from buyers. That is, $6.00 from the 38% of fans who were actually willing to pay.

This company, comScore Inc. is an independent, outside agency which has given the band the ability to refute this data. The band has reportedly claimed that the figures mentioned were “wholly inaccurate” but did not answer whether this figure is low or high. This means there is still potential that less than 38% paid for the album and paid less than $6.00. The band is keeping mum on the subject claiming that they can not answer how much they have made in this endeavor because fans are still downloading. The band appears to be evading the question but potentially for good reason.

There are many rationalizations people have created to pay little or nothing for this record. First, all of the money generated is going directly to the band. In the past, the peak royalty that the band received for an album was $.50 per purchase. Fans know this is the most the band has ever made so $6.00, which is cheap in the music world, is in actuality a large sum for the band.

More importantly, the quality of the album has been questioned. In Rainbows can be downloaded at 160 kilobytes per second while a typical album is downloaded at 320 kilobytes per second. Clearly the quality is inferior to the standard album, but technically the standard album was $14.99, not potentially free. While this argument is moot, it does show the logic of some listeners not paying for the album.

Some people think this decision is the future of music. Currently, everything is going digital for both easy accessibility and the global movement towards green. The format of the album is representative of the future of music. However, no one, except Radiohead, is actually sure whether this venture was a success or failure.

If concrete information would be released, there is a possibility that with only 38% of people paying around $6.00, the band is actually making more than with a typical tangible release and this may have been the biggest success in modern music history. But then again, In Rainbows is going to be released internationally on December 31, 2007 as yet another typically tangible album. Perhaps eluding to the misfortune of the pick your price experiment? Only time and actual information from the band will tell.
The first time it happened, I was about to present a homemade kite project to my third grade class. I had walked down the tiled hallways and into the carpeted classroom, feeling a nervous twitch in my stomach. And as I looked at my classmates’ stunned expressions when I entered the room, I realized that I had made a slight oversight in my presentation preparation: I wasn’t wearing any clothes.

Luckily, it was just a nightmare. In fact, most people have never experienced classroom nudity outside of their dreams. Most probably never will. But the few, the brave, the University of Delaware nude models, consistently tackle the uncomfortable reality of baring it all for a room full of strangers in the name of art.

The university pays $13 per hour for students to volunteer their time and bodies a few days a month for art classes. It is this seemingly easy money that attracted Nur Greene to the job in the first place. She suckered her friend, Gabe Bisio, into the unusual occupation, as well.

While the money was the initial draw, nude models have their hesitations too. Greene and Bisio both admit to anxious preparation for their first days on the job.

“Before the first time, I very thoroughly showered,” says Bisio, removing his graffiti-decorated trucker hat to ruffle his mop of brown hair.

“Yeah, me too,” Greene agrees.

And when the moment came to take it all off for the class, Greene says that one pleasant surprise calmed her nerves.

“I was really nervous walking there, but then I recognized a few of my friends in the class and they came with me to the bathroom to change,” says Greene. “I think that makes it easier.”

Technically, the nude models don’t really “change” into anything. A bathrobe is provided for them to wear as a cover when the class takes occasional breaks for students to have a breather. However, after posing nude for a while in front of a class almost entirely comprised of strangers, Greene and Bisio say it’s weird to put clothes on at all. They’ve even begun to find some humor in the discomfort of the situation.
“I love making people uncomfortable while I’m naked,” says Greene, although she appears just as comfortable lounging next to me, dressed in a maroon shirt and blue fishnet stockings paired under boxer shorts.

“Yeah, I’ll put my hand on a dude’s shoulder or something, while walking around naked during the breaks,” says Bisio.

Although the breaks may be an opportunity to stretch and relax, much of the class period consists of exhausting poses. Most positions are held for 20 to 30 minutes, but occasionally can last for an hour or two. While crazy acrobatics aren’t typically involved, remaining still for extended periods of time is still difficult for the models.

“You have to relax to keep your muscles still,” says Greene. “It gets cold sometimes, too.”

“Yeah, what sucks is, if you’re in pain for two hours, you just have to deal with it,” says Bisio. “If there’s this searing pain in your ass, it’s there for two hours.”

Greene adds, “When you try not to think about it, it worsens.”

Being the inspiration for artistic visions isn’t always easy or glamorous, but the soreness seems a manageable price to pay for the quick cash. Greene and Bisio both speak fondly about their job.

“I wish they needed us more than just a few times a month,” says Greene.

In addition to the pay, there are social perks to nude modeling. After all, Greene has occasionally tried to attract the attention of students in the classes she poses for.

“I tried to get a date out of it once. I tried to impress him,” says Greene. “But I guess I wasn’t his type.”

“I don’t know, a lot of people were drawing me androgynously that day,” she adds, laughing while tracing a marker drawing on her leg that fills a hole in her stocking.

Quirky statements like this reveal a self-reflective humor and confidence that both Greene and Bisio suggest comes from the modeling.

“I think what’s common between people who nude model is you have to be comfortable in your own skin,” reflects Bisio, standing up to stretch and revealing his tall, lean frame.

Greene suggests the feelings of self-assuredness and comfort seem to be contagious, putting the class at ease, as well.

“I like when I’m sitting there nude, and my stomach folds over. I feel like it makes everybody feel more comfortable. I don’t think they want the classic hot girl,” she says, kicking up her pink metallic flats.

If nude modeling can instill self-awareness in individuals, especially at a time in life when self-confidence seems to be lacking, perhaps clothing doesn’t need to speak for us at all times. Whether you’re in the privacy of your own room or letting it all hang out for a class of art students, being naked is a liberation we should indulge ourselves in more often. Just make sure it’s an appropriate time and place. No need for a job interview or lecture to hit a sour note on account of your newly liberated wardrobe.
In November, Iron Hill Brewery offered samples of a tradition long forgotten in this time of mechanical production and mass-produced commodities, showcasing their talent and dedication to cask-conditioned beer. It’s a refreshing revival of an old tradition that has been placed on the back burner in America by companies and popular taste.

I visited Iron Hill Brewery around twelve-noon to sample some brews and to see if the Irish side of me would enjoy a mid day pint or two or three. When I walked in to the restaurant, I was reminded of the country song “It’s five o’clock somewhere” and thought when in Rome, or Newark as the case was, do as the locals do.

Iron Hill’s ambiance mixes the new and the traditional, with a bar in the center of the restaurant and a clear window on the left side of the restaurant so patrons can view the brewing vats and see the workers preparing. There’s a very nice blend of tradition, with the bar and wooden floors like I’ve seen in classic pubs when I was visiting Ireland and England. The pubs feel quite homey and a good place to warm your bones by the fire with either a glass of whisky or a deep, dark pint. The atmosphere in those old pubs was as inviting and as warm as the people themselves.

The atmosphere of Iron Hill was very easy going, with a helpful staff that did not mind explaining
the process of cask-conditioning beer. As a novice to this technique, I was intimidated at first, not knowing what I might like and what might make me cringe. However, the staff was more than willing to help explain what I might like compared to the beers I am already know and love to drink on occasion.

I typically favor the darker ales over the lighter, golden beers. Cask-conditioned beer has no carbonation added while it’s in the cask. The carbonation is pumped into the cask with a hand pump at the bar. This provides an excellent, crisp taste. The casks they were serving from had to be hand pumped with a special engine because they were not under the typical carbon dioxide pressure of a keg. The casks, unlike kegs, are not pressurized, which means they can be poured and not tapped. The method of traditional extraction of the beer is referred to as a gravity pour. This simply means the beer is poured like most alcohols and liquors rather than being under pressure and fed through a tube. This adds to the crisp taste without producing a large head of foam.

The varieties of cask-conditioned beer showcased were derived from the traditional recipes of various regions in Europe, including Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland, Russia and, of course, Germany. There was also a sampling from the United States, representing the West Coast. These beers are made from traditional recipes that follow simple guidelines of being unfiltered and not pasteurized in the final stages of creation. They are left to ferment and carbonate naturally.

This being said, I most enjoyed the beers from Germany, Russia and Scotland. They were darker than what I am used to, but, surprisingly, they had a smooth crisp robust taste. The flavors were like nothing I have ever tasted before and, although I thought their flavor would be overpowering, I was pleasantly surprised. There was little to no aftertaste and it left me, in a good way, craving another pint.

Despite my positive experiences with the first three beers, the half pint I had from Wales had an overwhelming flavor. It was as if I had swallowed a fist full of potpourri. Ironically, I ate potpourri once when I was younger by accident of course and, needless to say, the experience was not enjoyable.

The entire process of cask conditioning makes for a great pint of beer. From the traditional ingredients that are used, to the natural process it goes through, the care and time put into the brewing process, the specialized technique used to pour a pint and the knowledgeable staff of Iron Hill Brewery made this a very good experience. I went to Iron Hill with a knowledge of beer and the beer making process, but I left with an appreciation for this time tested tradition and a desire to enjoy another pint when I have the opportunity.
No one wants to be called ignorant, but everybody is. Synonyms for ignorance are lack of knowledge and unawareness, not stupid.

Foreigners have surely been asked questions about their country that lacked basic knowledge and even caused offense. But for foreigners in the US, are the questions any different? The cliché is that Americans are ignorant, but they are not the only ones.

Being French and living in America, I’ve experienced the extent of the cliché about Americans. I have met few Americans that were able to resist the temptation to ask “Why do French people hate us?”

Thankfully, I never get the worst questions: If we had toilet paper in Europe, shaving habits and body odor. Actually what is toilet paper? Sike. I have to admit I thought that Americans were really fitting the stereotype for ignorance but after living here for a while I went back home for a vacation and I was surprised that I got asked questions that were just as ignorant! On the other side of the ocean the questions are most likely about politics: “Why did they vote for Bush?”, unaware that only about 30% of the population actually vote, and that those who did vote are represented by electoral colleges whereas popular vote determines victory in France.

Ignorance is a widespread disease that can often lead to wars and hate crimes, any country is prone to it. The words Anti-Americanism (against anything American) or Franco phobia (fear of all things French), the word Anti-Semite (hatred of the Jews) or more recently Arab phobia (fear and hate of Arabs) are now part of our vocabulary and a living proof of the problem causing fear and misunderstanding, ignorance.

As humans, we categorize anything we don’t fully understand. This is what stereotypes are made of. The book by Raymonde Carroll “Cultural Misunderstandings” illustrates among other things how a cultural misunderstanding can lead to a stereotype. For instance, the way that Americans call someone they took a class with a friend. For a French person, a friend is someone who you share something more unique with than Econ 151 or
Sociology 201. Ignorance of these differences leads to a stereotype that Americans are superficial and French are snooty, whereas the definition of the word “friend” is just different! Neither definition is better or correct.

Another stereotype is that the French are rude. But, imagine if you are in New York City and you ask for directions. You are just as likely to get shut down as if you asked a Parisian for it. It’s the chance you take in any city. They are both rude but no one asks: “why do New Yorkers hate other Americans?” What is considered rude in the US may not be rude in France and vice versa.

Americans don’t have a monopoly on ignorance, though. It is the disease of our time. I think we are all guilty of ignorance once in a while, but if we listen we just might learn something. We need to open our eyes...

...and ears and show it to those who can’t see the similarities in the other.

Just like Sting said, “I hope the Russians love their children too.” I know that Americans, French or Iranians all love their children. So the next time you meet a French person and you are dying to ask “why do French hate Americans,” please remember I might just be asking you why you voted for Bush... again!

I will leave the last word up to my mother who used to tell me when I was little “turn your tongue in your mouth seven times before you speak so that you don’t say something silly”. Before I say anything else: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7., Okay, I have nothing else to say.

I will just listen.

Ouvrons nos yeux! ¡Abrimos nuestros ojos!
On my first day of college, I walked in late to an auditorium full of people who supposedly lived in my dorm complex, but who I had never seen before. Later, I filled out a questionnaire about how comfortable I would be if my best friend were a minority. I can honestly say that if the questionnaire hadn’t made such a big deal about people of different races being friends, I wouldn’t have thought twice about it. In fact, during high school, many of my good friends were of a different race or religion than I. I couldn’t even keep track of peoples’ names yet, but through these orientation activities I was expected to reveal a side of myself that I didn’t even know existed.

On the next day of orientation, the activities intensified. We were asked to walk around a room and think of as many stereotypes as we could for all of the groups of people hanging on sheets of paper along the wall. As school progressed, we began having floor meetings, where we were often confronted with rigid, one-sided lesson plans that left little room for discussion. Our differing opinions were heard and ignored, in favor of closed minded preaching. The word “oppression” was used to describe even the most light-hearted joke. My floor revolted at more than one of our meetings. Instead of “agreeing” or “disagreeing” we created a third option—the middle ground. We argued against the lesson plan, and although it was a serious topic, some of us made jokes. After the meetings, our floor would get together and complain about what had just taken place.

Part of the Residence Life program includes one-on-one meetings with our RAs, and I thought that they would be a time to discuss topics of interest or complain about how much work I had. Instead, I was asked questions like “when were you first made aware of your sexuality?” and “have you ever witnessed oppression?” Most of the questions addressed concerns that I had never thought about. Even for questions I did not have an answer for, I felt obligated to respond with something. While the questions allowed my RA to get to know me better, they also made me uncomfortable revealing such personal information. The one-on-ones felt more formal than informal, as even when a certain topic excited me, we would simply move on to the next question. Although I wasn’t aware of it at the time, the RAs were asked to rate their residents on a scale from “best to worst” based on their responses to these questions.

Despite all of my complaining and resistance to the program, when I heard of its cancellation, I had mixed feelings. I was thankful not to have stressful, anxiety-provoking floor meetings the night before an exam, and I felt that I was already so accepting of different people that I did not need any more training. I was happy not to be asked questions about when I first became aware of my race, when my psychology text book clearly states that this is an event that occurs in early infancy, before you can remember it. But I also felt that the program had a good message—it was just misguided.

The Diversity Training program is only in its third year and like any new program, it contains a few kinks that need to be worked out. The topic at hand is an important one that needs to be presented in a new, exciting way that won’t cause kids to grumble that this is the same old stuff they did in high school. Most students here probably learned diversity throughout their school
days, even if they didn’t have formal training in it. The program’s cancellation is a necessary stop on the road to recovery, but it is not necessary that the program be gone for good. It preaches an important and necessary message. The same ends, however, can be produced without the means of calling every white person a racist.

An improvement in communication is a must. Many residents in the Russell Complex were told that the floor meetings were mandatory and were forced to make up any ones that were missed. When the drama concerning the diversity training started, a clarifying email was sent to the Complex residents stating that the meetings were actually optional. Even then, many students felt obligated to go. In addition, the program must be less critical. It is extremely judgmental to rate residents on a scale based on their responses to a few outlandish questions that no one has ever asked them before. It is also important to keep in mind that even white Christian males have been discriminated against. If people don’t focus on your color, they will focus on your religion.

If the program took a less accusatory tone and focused more on education, it would not only be less offensive, but more beneficial. Victimizing every non-white person is very different from learning to appreciate other ethnicities for their differences, with the latter being much more applicable. Instead of asking uncomfortable personal questions about when a person discovered their race or sexuality, we can learn about the values inherent in every race or sexuality. Each floor meeting, instead of isolating people further, has the potential to foster understanding and connection. A revision of the curriculum, instead of a simple dismissing of it, would retain the benefits of its goal while fixing any problems.

~ Michelle Chonofsky
In our casually dressed, politically charged society everyone is searching for the next inexpensive, unforgettable piece to add his or her day-to-day wardrobe. We all want something eye-catching and clever, something that will distinguish us from our not so avant-garde neighbor. We crave expression and want the world to know we are freethinking individuals. Let’s also not forget, we are “starving college students,” so, the cheaper the better. So what do 20-somethings of the 21st century wear to make the much-desired personal statement? The t-shirt.

For today’s consumer, t-shirts have become an integral part of our daily attire. T-shirts offer us a very personal connection to expression and design, a canvas for wearable art and social commentary. T-shirts are generally affordable and with the rise of do-it-yourself independent designers and websites such as Threadless, inexpensive and original shirts are easier to bag than ever. And no, we are not talking about the cotton classic your mother picked up for you at the last outlet sale. The t-shirts I speak of are usually politically savvy or too generous with sexual innuendos. Sometimes these shirts become the culprits of raunchy humor or even nerd humor. And others look more like hallucinations than wearable t-shirts. However, it is for these reasons that the 21st century t-shirt culture is growing rapidly, as we all scramble to find the shirt that defines what apparently our words cannot.

1. POLITICALLY OUTRAGED

These shirts are usually worn by rebellious young Democrats proclaiming their utter disgust for the non-rebellious Republicans. However, most of the time the shirts just serve as fuel to the fire that is the liberal stereotype. Student liberals already struggle with the misconception that all they do is whine, picket, or present uncomfortable visual images to guilt-trip students into providing for the poor. What’s the best way to promote the continuation of this stereotype? Oh right, somehow make an obnoxiously loud t-shirt that speaks for itself. These shirts state their case to the public, but often miss any true intellectual point. Favorites include “Nukes don’t kill people. People kill people. So let’s nuke people,” “More Trees, Less Bush” and “Jesus was a Liberal”. Wearing political t-shirts advertise a certain freedom of speech that is many times better left silent.
2. SEXUALLY CHARGED
These shirts seem to be a favorite of the Abercrombie clad, Lauguna Beach crowd. They are characteristic of the sleazy-chic culture now promoted through reality show bimbos and meatheads, and can be found in full glory at any Hollister t-shirt display. No need for boys to pretend they like long walks on the beach or for girls to act like they hate when guys talk to their chests. Shirts with the sayings “My Sexual Preference is Often,” “Looking for a Memorable One Night Stand” and for the girls “Who Needs Brains When You Have These?” are just a few charming pick-up lines offered. On the bright side, at least a girl knows what she’s getting into before dating a guy. If he’s boasting a shirt like, “So Many Strippers, Only one Lap,” he might not be Mr. Right.

3. OBNOXIOUSLY UNFUNNY
These shirts offer the viewer a chance to see the wearer’s humorous side, however it is rare that they strike everyone’s funny bone. It’s kind of like those funny friends who are loud and stage crazy things to make people laugh. After the second time they act like a fool or streak in public, it’s not really funny anymore. Same thing goes for these shirts. A shirt that says "Party Farter" or "I Piss on the Seats" might get a chuckle the first time around, but then it just gets obnoxious. Blatantly rude shirts will probably not even get the courtesy of a first time laugh. Things like, “If you can read this, make me a sandwich” and “I See Dumb People” won’t be winning any congeniality points for the wearer.

4. NERD HUMOR
Social rejects unite! These shirts are your true calling. In contrast to the obnoxiously obvious humor that some shirts provide, other shirts go for a nerd humor that will elicit more confused stares than laughs. T-shirts like “Gigger is Better” and “I <3 Powerleveling” may never get the wearer laid, but the humor is never lost on the loyal band of gamers. For the English nerds, shirts like “Shakespeare Hates your Emo Poems” and “A Thesaurus is Not a Giant Lizard,” provide much-needed humor to distract from the fact they’ll be living in cardboard boxes upon graduating. Even if the humor is lost on most, at least social minorities can now literally wear their awkwardness with pride.

5. OPIUM DREAMS
For all stoners and binge drinkers that feel no shirt truly represents their state of disarray, here comes the bizarre and disturbing world of t-shirt culture. Most of these shirts don’t even have words explaining them, probably because no words could explain them. For example, one shirt depicts an obviously drunk clown puking rainbows into a toilet. Another looks like a plain white t-shirt with an eerily realistic design of blood splattered on the chest. The artistic mind vomit that is emitted onto these shirts might be creepy to some, but perhaps that is art at its best.

Now these are just a few of the many categories of t-shirts we may see crowding our favorite stores in the near future. Dozens of new types of t-shirts will arise, and many will lose popularity as we vie for new types of wearable expressions. Whether it be belt buckles that simply declare the owner is a “Pimp” or “Bitch” or underwear that yells “Bite me” or “Suck This,” any of these already existent mediums could rise to become the next fad in individuality and self-declaration.

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As if “I Love NewYork” didn’t cover trashy love based reality TV already, “A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila” should fill in the holes. Tila, a “hot” bisexual girl, is looking for love, and in today’s world, where else is there other than MTV and your own show to find true love and real romance? After all, only the best relationships are created on television.

In a “Shot at Love” there is the added twist that both Males and Females are competing for Tila’s heart, while only one will win in the end. MTV really thought hard about this show; its main appeal lies in the fact that lesbians vying for Tila’s affection could make out with one another if they get bored. This should attract more viewers than the too similar “I Love NewYork”; Straight guys can’t resist trying to catch some girl-on-girl action, and of course, the lesbian viewers will find the show’s lesbians hotter than the star Tila Tequila (which isn’t hard, considering Tila is reminiscent of E.T.). Not to mention, the men on the show are so irresistible, that they might be able to turn a lesbian, giving the viewers the unexpected night-cam shot of them messing around at night. You have got to love how MTV acts like they didn’t plan this – there’s twenty people and only one bed in the whole house; clad with silk sheets nonetheless.

This show has to be a breakthrough for MTV; it’s got everything all the other shows don’t have. Of course this is a lie; it degrades women and this show isn’t helping the bisexual or lesbian community assimilate either. On the surface, this show could be helping the general public be more open towards sexuality, yet, the context of the show makes it just another piece of trash - MTV quality.

This show exploits bisexuality multiple times by unfortunately highlighting the stereotype that bisexuals are attracted to anything with genitals. What’s laughable is that Tila uses her bisexuality for dramatic purposes. Anytime she’s not getting enough, she confesses that being bi is difficult, and this is her “first time coming out” and everyone is just making it so hard. “First time coming out”? Obviously she had to tell the producers she was bi, if indeed she is at all. And if this was her first time coming out, she picked one hell of a time to do it. When MTV uses bisexuality as a platform for drama, it’s a slap in the face to anyone who ac-
tually had to fear coming out. This little midget slut has twenty-plus people chasing after her, and she is woebegone. I guess she’s not that big of a hoe after all.

It degrades women by idolizing the idea that looks are everything, and that a girl becomes desirable and worthy of love by being a total idiot with a tan and breast implants (okay, maybe they’re real). I mean, where did Tila Tequila come from and why do these people even want to hook up with her? MySpace and Playboy got her famous, but what is she really famous for other than being eye candy and a tool? Everything about these women on the show does nothing good for setting positive roles for girls.

And what about the men? While I first overlooked them, they also are setting a bad example. All of the men on the show are macho and basically there for sex. Supposedly they are there to win Tila’s love and affection, but after all, MTV is really just talking about sex drive here. How else would the men and women really “fall for Tila” when all they’ve seen of her is her tits? I doubt those five minute one-on-one talks really let them find each other out as a person. The roles the males play also promote negativity: they resort to fighting when things don’t go their way, and they frequently disrespect the women around them.

Regardless, what can I expect from MTV? It appeals to the shallowness in everyone, idolizing sex and good looks. People know MTV is trash, and luckily no one takes it seriously—at least we hope. However, if there are still some viewers who believe these harmful stereotypes are true, advocate groups for women or the gay community may have a more difficult time dispelling these false and insulting generalizations. Yet, I suppose it’s a bit harsh to call Tila a midget slut. Sadly, this nation runs on money, so she’s only being a good American citizen by doing what she can to get that cash. I’m sure E.T. would do the same.
The crowds were singing loud the night of Sunday November 18 in the Mariner Arena. Big Christian Rock / Crossover names Switchfoot and Relient K joined new band Ruth in their “Appetite for Construction” tour. This wasn’t a dancing and screaming crowd, and part of the lack of excitement came from the early 6 pm start time and the bitter cold outside. However, the music lacked nothing. Ruth had a more garage band feel, an appropriate choice to open two bands with garage band roots. Relient K ran a typical set, featuring favorites like “I So Hate Consequences” and “Pink Tux to the Prom”. They even brought an inflatable igloo and polar bear onto the stage and played a song from their recently released Christmas album “Let it Snow Baby… Let it Reindeer” as fake snow rained down from the ceiling. The sets were catchy and lead singer Matt Thiessen kept the audience laughing and singing along throughout the night.

Headliner Switchfoot changed the atmosphere completely upon taking the stage. Anyone who hasn’t seen Switchfoot frontman Jon Foreman perform is missing out on an experience. He is a showman to the core, something that doesn’t always come through in his music. He was in the crowd one minute, surrounded by screaming fans, and spinning with the mike stand on the stage the next. In the middle of “American Dream” the entire band froze, and the audience cheered them back out of tableau, a very cool effect. Foreman improvised on some favorites, like “Gone”, which worked sometimes but was muddled in other places. His riskiest move by far, however, was the choice of a slow song that included a cello in the encore. He performed “Let Your Love Be Strong”, which seemed to disappoint the audience, but in a smooth motion transitioned into “Dare You To Move”, Switchfoot’s crowd-pleaser by far.

Alluding to the name of the tour, the concert was held to benefit Habitat for Humanity, and contained a brand new song called “Rebuild”. It felt like a shameless advertisement, but it was performed with all three bands onstage, leading to an interesting dynamic. The best moment in the concert, however, had nothing to do with the bands in question or Habitat for Humanity. Relient K, obviously fans of NBC’s “The Office”, did a musical tribute to the show, leading into a clever rendition of the theme song.

All in all, this was a successful performance by what are possibly the best bands in Christian Rock- with secular listeners loving it too. It was an evening of fun and certainly a night to remember.
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