

opinion

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BROADSIDE

George Mason University's Student Newspaper

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Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down



Snow cancelling classes.
Eeeeeeeeeee!!!



Not getting information about classes being canceled until after most commuters had woken up and started the journey to Mason.



Uhhhh, no terrorist attacks against the country since President Obama took over? That's pretty good, I guess. Keep it up!

ANDREW BROWN *Broadside Correspondent*

On a drizzly Friday evening last November, I sat in a Starbucks in our nation's capital, enjoying a hot café mocha with a friend. Suddenly, I heard a commotion outside and hurried to get a better look. Standing amid a crowd of gaping onlookers, I beheld protestors representing the ogre organization Students for a Democratic Society—the largest, most contentious college student association in the country—marching through the streets, carrying doodled signs and shouting slogans of discontent about a “student debt crisis” and the need for “accessible” higher education.

There must have been a total of tens of thousands of Washington residents who witnessed this. Intersections everywhere were clogged with

endless traffic jams. I was shocked that our public streets were being taken over. They virtually shut down the city with their antisocial, histrionic behavior. It turns out, as I discovered, that this wasn't happening just in Washington or even just all over the country, but all over the world.

It is already enough that the new president is swinging from a White House chandelier, yowling for redistribution, trying to pluck bright crystals of hard-earned wealth from our most distinguished citizens in order to give them to the lazy partygoers, many of whom are uninvited guests who shouldn't be here in the first place. In addition to this, though, now mobs everywhere are trying to bring the whole beautiful chandelier crashing down.

Over the past decade, student debt levels have increased by 108 percent,

according to a 2004 report published by the College Institute for Affordability and Success. Why is this, though? Because of university “greed?” That's not a viable explanation. It's because liberal professors are ruining our higher educational system, offering a useless curriculum and forcing students to spend money on precious course space.

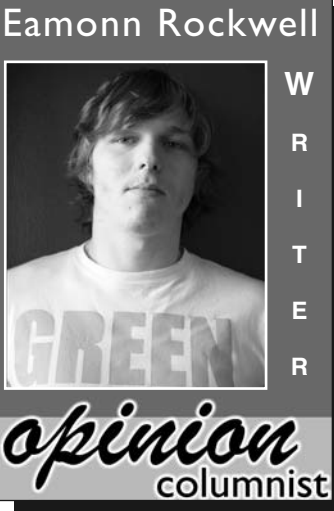
The bottom line is that tuition needs to be raised next year and preferably by the maximum 10 percent. It will be good for the university, its investors and its image. It will help us maintain the top spot as the premiere rising college in America. The parents of our pampered students can afford it, but they're just greedy.

I always pass by the Students for a Democratic Society in the Johnson Center on Wednesday night. Some would say they're dangerous.

This Wednesday, they were huddled around a table near the information desk, petitioning for lower tuition, as the student body sat around ignoring them—indifferent to their cause—because deep down, everyone agrees that they're wrong about the purported student debt “crisis” (and most of the ones who don't are too apathetic to do anything). No, they're not dangerous. They're harmless. Education is already accessible and democratic for anyone willing to learn. My dad worked hard so I could go to school to strive towards becoming an educated alumnus, and I'll work hard for my children's future.

So when they passed my sidewalk on that night last November, I did what any representative of freedom would do . . . I gave them thumbs down and shouted my discontent right back.

Auto-Tune Lectures Now *Vocoding Helps Higher Education*



the mind-numbing dullness of lectures, such as using PowerPoint presentations or having a professor who is barely audible, making it easier for students to drift off into dreamland. As a result, most college students can't remember dick even when sober.

But are the students entirely to blame? Probably. But when one is trying to have a life, including, but not limited to; drinking, carousing, brawling, etc., one cannot be blamed for passing out when some old man drones on about vectors while icy eath hovers so close above his shoulder that you can actually see the chilling apparition sharpening its scythe. It is times like these that professors need to grab their students' attention and get them involved in education, if only to spare themselves from the merciless spectre that haunts us all. This can be solved by auto-tuning the lectures.

Auto-Tune, aka pitch-

correction, aka that vocal effect that T-Pain uses all the time is not new, but thanks to T-Pain, it has become pretty much required if you want a Top-40 hit. Other musicians who use Auto-Tune (or effects like it) include Daft Punk, Zapp, Roger Troutman of Zapp, when he sang on 2Pac's “California Love,” and Cher. Each one of these artists has spawned thousands of imitators. Why not have professors record the lectures in Auto-Tune and inspire thousands of people, who like the crazy robot voice it gives them, to contribute to intellectual discussions?

Some say this may cheapen the intellectual integrity of our college. This is irrelevant as George Mason University, to the best of my knowledge, does not have integrity. Others will argue that the Auto-Tune bandwagon may be falling apart soon, and that we shouldn't invest money in something that's just going to sound stupid

in six months. These are arguments that I don't care for and won't respond to. Furthermore, there's no chance in hell you can pass out in a lecture if your professor sounds like T-Pain, especially after consuming enough horse tranquilizers to cancel next year's Triple Crown. Through my own experimentation, I've determined that it's impossible.

Mason's got money and it knows it, and it should be able to go so far as to take it out of its pocket and show it and throw it. The boss (Mason) has cash flow and can use it to go hard. I can't believe it. “It” being the notion that we shouldn't auto-tune lectures, and arguments against that notion are starting to sound like a bunch of karaoke. Auto-tuning lectures will lead Mason to the good life, with enough money left over to buy you a drank. If Mason refuses to auto-tune lectures, then we've officially been chopped and screwed.

Barack Obama Embraces Earth

JOHN KOBLAN *Staff Writer*

President Barack Obama recently set new policies to curb greenhouse gas emissions and improve fuel efficiency standards. These policies strongly contrast those set forth in the Bush administration's Energy Policy Act of 2005, which Washington, D.C.-based public interest group, Public Citizen, called an “\$842 million “giveaway” to oil refineries.

In 2000, Exxon Mobil Corporation gave \$1.2 million to Bush's campaign, and Chevron gave \$780,000. Former

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was a Chevron Director from 1991 to 2001. It's no coincidence, folks. The sleazy political paybacks of the Bush administration are over. The American people voted for change and Obama, as our new president, symbolizes that change. Obama wants every car made in 2011 to get at least 35 miles per gallon. He is also more open to allowing states to take the lead on the climate crisis.

“President Obama will direct federal regulators on Monday [January 26] to move swiftly on an application by California and 13 other states to set strict automobile emission

and fuel efficiency standards,” said two administration officials. The president will also instruct the agency to begin enforcing a 2007 national fuel efficiency standard law that the Bush administration refused to act on. The partnership between Obama and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is significant. The federal government will no longer stand in the way of states that want tougher emissions regulations.

“The federal government must work with, not against, states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said Obama. “The days of doing nothing are over.”

Obama's environmental

plan is bold. It is also a cannonball shot against the oil companies who have controlled Washington for the past eight years. Our president realizes that the days of doing nothing have put our planet in peril. Obama sees the link between environmental protection and national security.

The visionary partnership between Schwarzenegger and Obama will save this country and our planet. It is the future. Do you want to work with Obama and Schwarzenegger for a better America and world? Or do you want to be left in the past?

Quote



“What I'm dealing with is so vast and great that it can't be called the truth. It's above the truth.”
- Sun Ra

Have an opinion?
We want to hear it.

Send your Letter to the Editor to:
opinion@broadsideonline.com

NANETTE YANDELL *Broadside Contributor*

President Barack Obama's inaugural address signaled a coming era of positive change for this country. Obama exemplifies a leadership and an awareness that could potentially bring many different cultural groups together. However, Obama talked about the country's history as though it began when the Europeans arrived on the eastern shores. When referring to those who earned and worked for the greatness of the U.S., he said, “For us, they packed up their

few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life . . . For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West; endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth.” Obama described our ancestors as the most recent settlers and explorers of the U.S.

A well-respected leader, Obama is seen as a lighthouse of hope in the U.S. and across the world. His position gave him an opportunity to mention Native Americans, the indigenous people of this land. He had ample opportunity to avoid the

exclusion of the history and existence of these people.

When speaking of the U.S. as a newly formed, unified state, Obama left something out: There were already people living on this land. There were farms, communities and a variety of cultures already present. The Europeans murdered thousands of people in order to claim this land and all the resources here. The only mention of bloodshed in the entire speech is in this line: “In the year of America's birth . . . patriots huddled . . . snow was stained with blood.”

This nation was built on

unity, resourcefulness and perseverance long before European settlers set out and conquered this land. The birth of “America” is an illusive social construct of a government system established for the freedom and future of light-skinned Europeans. I am hopeful that Obama will lead this country in a positive direction, and I appreciate that we finally have a president that is not afraid to discuss the role of history in shaping the U.S. I hope his term will also address the needs and concerns of the oldest cultural group in the U.S.

Go Bus Serves No One

Shuttle Service, 24-Hour Library Are Massive Wastes

SARAH FORT
Broadside Contributor

With the spring semester underway, I was eager to see the most recent copy of *Broadside* on the racks. Initially, I saw nothing that surprised me as I glanced through the pages: freshmen caught drinking in Presidents Park, advertisements for people wanting to adopt babies, sports statistics, the usual. Yearning for a little more excitement, I searched through the articles I don't normally find interesting. What I found there actually did surprise me.

What is a "Go-Bus"? I mean, I read the article, but the concept is still somehow baffling. I read further, in horror, at the newest waste of money George Mason University—or the Student Government, I don't know which—has decided to foist on the student body. This "Go-Bus" is a proposed shuttle that will carry freshmen (because it will be mostly freshmen who utilize

this feature) to places that can already be reached by another bus service. Wonderful. I rode the CUE bus (for free) often my freshman year, so I feel for people who don't have cars on campus. Regardless, I am less than enthusiastic about Mason wasting more of my money on something I'll have little use for. I continued reading and got to the Opinion section of the paper. In big, bold letters I read "Why Mason Needs a 24-Hour Library". I literally cringed. When I saw the smiling face of Student Body President, Zach Golden, I cringed again. Isn't this the same fellow who wanted to throw my money at a shuttle that neither I nor the majority of my 30,000 tuition-paying friends will ever use? Golden believes that Mason needs a 24-hour library to increase its prestige. He argues that commuter students would benefit greatly from this service, as they would have somewhere to study before early-morning classes. I feel this begs the

question: are they commuters, or are they homeless? With no offense intended toward the homeless community, this is asinine. If you are a commuter student with early-morning classes, chances are that you're at home directly before those classes begin. Is Golden supposing that commuters get out of class at 10 p.m. (at the latest) and think to themselves, "Oh man, just nine and a half hours until my 7:30 a.m. exam . . . Where will I go to study at 4 a.m.?" You know where they'll be? They'll be home. Golden also argues that residential freshmen will make use of a 24-hour library so they have somewhere to study when their roommates are trying to sleep. During my previous two years at Mason, I had between one and four roommates. If I needed somewhere to study after 2 a.m. and before 7 a.m. (when the JC, SUB I, and SUB II are open), I could have gone to a common room, study lounge or a friend's room, but frankly, I never had to

study that badly before 7 a.m. They're freshmen, Mr. Golden, not masochists. While I can understand opening a library for 24 hours during finals week, the cost of lighting, heating, cleaning and staffing a 24/7 library is too great to justify its semester-long use. His motive, however, is something I agree with: Mason needs to address modern student needs. You know what need I want you to address, Mr. President? My need to not pay more tuition money, because paying more tuition money is exactly what I will be doing if this harebrained scheme and others like it are put into effect. Where else will the money paying for these services, that benefit slim minorities of the Mason community, be coming from? I know that throwing money around has become quite popular these days, but I'd like to think that Mason treats its community better than the crooks in Washington treat the country.

Best Sports Year Ever?

BRENDAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

The Question on Everyone's Mind: Was 2008 the best sports year ever?

How does one quantify the best sports year ever—historical significance, the impact of the year's outcomes, entertainment value?

Now, every year seems to be the best sports year ever. Our society aims in on instant history.

I am taking a to-each-his-own approach. Personally, the sports year is defined by moments of excellence and 2008 had plenty.

Facing a third-and-5 on their own 44-yard line with 1:15 remaining, quarterback Eli Manning scrambled from the New England Patriots defenders completing a 40-yard pass downfield to New York Giants receiver David Tyree. Tyree's clinching helmet catch in the Giants' Super Bowl XLIII win has been regarded as the greatest play in NFL history.

The Giants' upset over the 18-0 Patriots was only the first of the year's exciting championships.

We were witnesses to the University of Kansas Jayhawks' overtime thriller over the University of Memphis Tigers in the NCAA Tournament when Mario Chalmers hit the game-tying three-pointer at the end of regulation; Rafael Nadal's win to overtake Roger Federer, the world's number one player, at Wimbledon in the best tennis match ever played; an old-school NBA Finals matchup between the Los Angeles Lakers and Boston Celtics, in which guard Paul Pierce helped the Celtics win in game six; the U.S. men's basketball team's Olympics gold medal; Fresno State's underdog win in the NCAA Baseball

tournament; and the Philadelphia Phillies' World Series victory over the surprising American League champion Tampa Bay Rays.

The argument is strengthened further by the individual heroics of Olympic athletes Michael Phelps and Usain Bolt, and Davidson University Wildcats' guard Stephen Curry.

Swimmer Michael Phelps shocked the world by winning a record eight gold medals at the Summer Olympics in Beijing, China. Usain Bolt became the world's fastest sprinter collecting three gold medals.

Stephen Curry reminded the fans that the undersized cannot be overlooked after the 6'3" guard averaged 32 points per contest in his four tournament games. Davidson reached the Elite Eight before losing a heartbreaker to the eventual tournament champions, Kansas.

Still unsure if 2008 was the best sports year ever? Do not forget about Tiger Woods' remarkable performance at the U.S. Open in June, which arguably was the top story of the year.

Tiger Woods managed to come back from being ranked 20th to sit atop the leaderboard after round three with a 3 under par 210. He captured his 14th career major after defeating Rocco Mediate in a 19-hole playoff—all with torn ligaments in his knee.

From the clear pain on Tiger's face with every stroke to the nights families across the world gathered to watch Michael Phelps do the unthinkable—2008 is sure to be remembered.

But did 2008 have enough moments of excellence to be the best sports year ever?

To each his own.

DO YOU HAVE AN OPINION?

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DRUG CULTURE, HOMOSEXUALITY
& ANYTHING ELSE...

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