

opinion

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Remember Those Who Serve

SABRA HAYES
Staff Writer

In today's struggling economy, it is very easy to forget the people who serve. I'm not talking about those who risk their lives in the armed forces, but those who serve in restaurants. Some of us have trouble trying to figure out how much to tip someone. Others question if a tip should be left at all. Working as a server, I have gained a newfound respect for every one of my co-workers in this under-appreciated industry.

I have noticed that many people have become so obsessed with penny pinching that they forget the basic rule of dining out: leave a tip. Most servers only make \$2.13 an hour. This is drastically below minimum wage and you can bet that most servers work for every penny of that \$2.13. Many people do not know that tips are taxed. Every server is required to tip out the busers and the bar staff at the end of every shift. The tips, including cash tips, must also be declared on the timecard. The taxes on tips apply just as they would to any other pay check. I doubt that very many people stop to consider just how much of the tip they leave actually makes it into their server's pocket.

With the economy in a recession, people are more interested in saving money than spending it. Those in the service industry are getting gyped because customers are spending as little as possible on a meal. What needs to be understood is that those of us who work in the food service industry cannot get by solely on an hourly wage; we need and

work hard for those tips to support ourselves and pay our bills. The typical patron underestimates the workload expected of servers. Not only are they responsible for cleaning your table, bringing your drinks and food and ensuring your overall dining experience is a pleasant one, they are expected to serve in the exact same manner for all of their other tables. If customers are worried about spending money then they should skip dining out altogether.

I'd like to tell you a story. Back in the 1930s, when an ice cream sundae cost much less than it does today, a ten-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. "How much is an ice cream sundae?" asked the little boy. "Fifty cents," said the waitress. The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins he had.

"Well, how much is a plain dish of ice cream?" he asked. By now, more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing very impatient. "Thirty-five cents," she replied abruptly. The little boy again counted his coins. "I'll have the plain ice cream," he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came back, she began to cry. As she wiped down the table, there sat neatly beside the empty dish, two nickels and five pennies. You see, he didn't order the sundae because he wouldn't have had enough money to leave her a tip.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Gunston Go-Bus Will Serve Mason Well

Broadside published an opinion article in the Feb. 2 edition titled, "Go-Bus Serves No One; Shuttle Service, 24-Hour Library are Massive Wastes" to which I would like to offer this rebuttal. I must first clarify that I ran against Zack Golden for the Student Government Presidency last year and lost, (a public congratulations, though late, is still in order) and that I had no part in planning or designing the Gunston's Go-Bus idea.

With that disclaimer out of the way, I will get down to why I feel obliged to respond to Ms. Fort's article. I can understand her frustration at what seems like unnecessary spending to create antiquated services, as she said modern students do not need ways to get around town that are more eco-friendly than the car, but the fact is that Mason is only spending money it

already has.

Let's talk specifically about the Go-Bus for a second. A look at the Student Government website tells us that this service will run from 3 p.m. to 2 a.m., Thursday through late night Saturday, with stops at University Mall, Old Town Fairfax, Fairfax Corner, Fair Oaks Mall and Fair Lakes Shopping Center. From 2 a.m. to 3 a.m., the Go-Bus will only make rounds between Old Town and campus. This service seems to me a perfectly acceptable way to spend our tuition money since the CUE Bus (which we do pay for through our student fees) does NOT visit all these areas—Fairfax Corner, Fair Oaks Mall, Fair Lakes Shopping Center—and the Cue Bus only runs a full schedule until about 9 p.m., with two runs staying open until about midnight. On Saturdays, however, you will not see a CUE

Bus on the streets past 9 p.m.

George Mason University needs a service that is going to bring students together off campus. There are great places to eat, drink and hang out that are not within walking distance of campus. While Ms. Fort discounts the desires of freshmen, (after all, they only make up a quarter of the undergraduate population of the school) they too need ways to get around. If given a choice between walking or taking an additional shuttle trip to West Campus to get their cars, or taking the Go-Bus straight to their destination, why would they not take the Go-Bus and save a little bit of time and a small piece of our ozone? Additionally, it should go without saying that since this service is provided late into the night, older students who live on campus will be able to use it to

get to and from Old Town Fairfax without having to drive, a benefit no one should overlook.

Many of my friends and I believe the Go-Bus will help bring Mason students together and strengthen the bond we share as students. The feeling of camaraderie most students felt during the Final Four streak of 2006 (I know it is overused, but bear with me) was unmistakable. Mason has done a lot to build on that experience, but it takes time. I believe most students would appreciate the opportunity to reconnect with other students, even if it is on a 30-minute bus ride to the mall.

Alex Innes
Government and
International Politics

Don't Waffle, Don't Backpedal

JAAP WEEL
Broadside Contributor

When Stephen Benjamin joined the U.S. Navy, he knew what he was getting into. Every day of his life as a naval officer he would live in fear of becoming a former naval officer.

Of course, everyone in the military fears a premature end to their career. Those who join the military voluntarily sign up for a risky job; they know it and they are well-rewarded for it.

But it was not foreign enemies with bullets or shells that threatened to end Stephen's military career as an Arabic translator. It was his superiors, wielding a policy known as Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

In 2007, Stephen Benjamin was dismissed after inspectors digging through a chat system had found references to the fact that he had committed that

gravest of military errors—he had told.

No, he had not told a lie or an official secret. He had told someone that he was gay.

Never mind that Arabic translators are in short supply and crucial to the difficult war effort in Iraq. Never mind that military personnel in general are in short supply: so short, in fact, that recruiters have been told to relax all sorts of rules, ranging from age restrictions to criminal record checks.

The armed forces employ nearly one tenth of the entire U.S. work force. That means that one in ten jobs is inaccessible to anyone who is gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Don't Ask, Don't Tell sounded like a sensible compromise when Bill Clinton signed off on it. No longer would the military make a big deal out of the sexual orientation of its

personnel. Nobody would ask about it, nobody would talk about it, and all would be quiet.

Reality turned out different. In practice, Don't Ask Don't Tell means that "an honest statement of one's sexual orientation to anyone, anywhere, anytime is grounds for discharge," as the Service Members' Legal Defense Network puts it. Gay service members need to make a choice: live a lie or leave the service.

As an American, I want service members to be judged based on the sacrifices they make to serve their country. Americans support a military that selects its employees by their qualifications and their commitment, especially in times of war.

With so much disapproval of current policy, there is only one way to sustain it: refer the issue to further investigations,

to be carried out at a leisurely pace interrupted only by the occasional interdepartmental memo which is—you guessed it—precisely what the Obama administration has seen fit to do.

In politics, "further study" is conducted, more often than not, to keep matters in limbo than to actually study them further. While matters are being studied further, few ask questions, and no one has to give them answers.

The matter has been investigated at length, many times before. Other industrialized democracies, including Israel, have realized long ago that there are more important qualifications for military personnel than the gender of your significant other.

On the Connection Between Race and Behavior

MICHAEL GRYBOSKI
Broadside Contributor

As we continue into Black History Month, questions regarding race in modern America boil to the surface. Has the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. been realized? Can we create a racially blind society? Questions like these are oftentimes the bedrock of forums held in schools, churches, and other gatherings. I would like to propose a question that though seldom mentioned is often implied in our words and even deeds: is there a connection between race and behavior? The answer should obviously be no and yet do we really believe that? In contemporary conversation, we Americans speak about people having "Jewish sarcasm", an "Irish temper", or a "Black attitude." Entities like American Renaissance, a self-described publication dedicated to charting the significance of race, as well as an advocate for white separatism (which they consider different from white supremacy), believes race and behavior are connected. Says their website, "Attempts to gloss over the significance of race or even to deny its reality only make problems worse. Progress requires the study of all aspects of race, whether historical,

cultural, or biological."

One of the more outspoken figures of American Renaissance is Jared Taylor. A polyglot brought up by politically liberal missionaries in Japan, Taylor uses both American Renaissance and his organization, the New Century Foundation, to advance the interests of white Americans. As he said in an interview with Derek Turner, "...if whites alone fail to act as a group, they jeopardize their long-term survival as a distinct people with a distinct culture and way of life." Taylor advocates this racial identity under the assumption that race and behavior are connected: "A realistic evaluation of race leads to the conclusion that race and culture are inseparable. Some individuals can fully embrace a culture established by people of a different race but most cannot."

American Renaissance is by no means the only group out there who believes these things, yet they serve as an example. There are fundamental problems with their assessments on race and behavior. Regarding the above quote, how does Taylor explain social developments like cultural diffusion, in which various populations incorporate cultural items once alien to their society? Of the many examples that could be used, India serves well. India's current political

system is a democracy, an import from the British. If race and culture are inseparable, then how can Taylor account for an ethnically non-British population (Indians) successfully incorporating a British cultural import (democracy)?

Taylor's own epiphanies are also tainted by fundamental attribution error. Taylor explained in his interview with Turner the watershed for the conclusions he arrived at regarding race and culture: "I spent a year travelling in West Africa, where I discovered that my liberal beliefs in racial and cultural equivalence were wrong." Given the violent history of modern West Africa, the implication is that black Africans were incapable of democracy and civil society during times of desperation. This implication is blatantly spelled out in a long article about the Hurricane Katrina disaster in New Orleans written by Taylor: "The races are different. Blacks and whites are different. When blacks are left entirely to their own devices, Western Civilization—any kind of civilization—disappears."

Both of these statements are factually problematic. Regarding the first quotation, there have been plenty of democracies in predominately white nations that have collapsed during times of

tumult, lest we forget Weimar Germany or the four republics France had before its present system. The second quotation is also fallacious because it ignores the many disasters in which an all but white community has resorted to barbaric activity, such as the disturbing stories from the Jamestown colony or European cities when hit by the Bubonic Plague during the 14th century. Civilization disappears when anarchy ensues, which can come from any population regardless of pigmentation.

American Renaissance is built on the assumption of race and behavior being the same. And though we justly criticized men like Taylor for their position, let us also not forget we also will periodically do the same. There is a reason why terms like "Irish Temper", "Jewish Sarcasm", and "Black Attitude" are clichés. This even though there are plenty of people without Irish ancestry who have short tempers, plenty of non-Semites who are bitingly sarcastic, and many non-blacks who have a personality that could be construed as a "black attitude." We as a community should make an effort to remove this from serious consideration and do so through showing that there is no connection between race and behavior, only social construction backed by iffy reasoning.

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Broadside is a weekly publication printed each Monday for the George Mason University and surrounding Fairfax community. The editors at *Broadside* have exclusive authority over the content that is published. There are no outside parties that play a role in the newspaper's content, and should there be a question or complaint regarding this policy, the editor in chief should be notified at the information given above.

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"Do not call for black power or green power. Call for brain power."

—Barbara Jordan

Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down



GUNSTON'S GO-BUS has made living on campus more convenient by making it easier for students to meet their off-campus needs. The bus shuttles students from the Sandy Creek shuttle stop to Fairfax Corner, Fair Oaks Mall, the Fair Lakes Shopping Center, and Old Town Fairfax. Visit sg.gmu.edu/resources/go-bus/ for schedules and more.



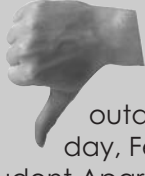
Recognizing V-Day in its ninth year, **VAGINA MONOLOGUES** will benefit Women for Women International and GMU Victims of Violence Fund. (Sponsored by Sexual Assault Services, Women and Gender Studies, and Office of Alcohol, Drug and Health education)



A non-profit movement dedicated to finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide, **TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS** exists to encourage, inform, inspire and also to invest directly into treatment and recovery. Show your support by writing "love" on your arms on Feb. 13



INCREASE IN HOUSING RATES. The Board of Visitors met on Feb. 4 and voted to approve new room and board rates for 2009-2010. The average increase for most students living on campus will be \$450 or 6.25 percent for the year. Depending on accommodations chosen, the actual room rate increase varies from 4 to 7.6 percent.



INTERNET AND CABLE OUTAGES beginning on Monday, Feb. 9 through Thursday, Feb. 12, there will be an internet outage for the Student Apartments and on Friday, Feb. 13 there will be a cable tv outage for Student Apartments. At least there's the Johnson Center. Visit outages.gmu.edu for more information.



VAMPIRE OBSESSIONS courtesy of Stephenie Meyer. It was a lot easier when we just had Anne Rice and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. But now the CW's picked up a pilot based on the *Vampire Diaries* series of books. Move over *Twilight* and *True Blood*.

Ringling Brothers Stands Trial for Abuse

BRIANNE LANIGAN
Broadside Contributor

In a book titled *The Circus King*, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus grandfather, Henry N. Ringling, says that, "it is not usually a pretty sight to see the big cats trained . . . they are all chained to their pedestals and ropes are put around their necks to choke them down and make them obey. All sorts of other brutalities are used to force them to obey the trainer and learn their tricks. They work from fear."

In addition to the beatings detailed by Ringling, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has decades of records describing Ringling Bros. violence towards the animals under their care. The animals deserve justice. On Feb. 4, a trial eight years in the making finally began. The defendants, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, along with its parent company, Feld Entertainment, are now being held accountable in federal court for these documented abuses and violations of the Endangered Species Act.

Ringling Bros. has been charged with unlawful, abusive treatment of the highly endangered Asian elephants used in their circus. Sworn

testimony from former Ringling Bros. employees and video footage have documented that Ringling Bros. uses a weapon known as a bullhook, or "guide," to beat the elephants into submission in order to train them to performance tricks. Tom Rider, a plaintiff and former Ringling employee, stated under oath to Congress that, "after my three years working with elephants in the circus, I can tell you that they live in confinement and they are beaten all the time when they don't perform properly."

This unprecedented trial will decide whether or not Ringling Bros. will be prohibited from further use of bullhooks and leg chains on the elephants. What does this mean for the future of Ringling Bros.? Is the use of force and weaponry really so vital to keeping the "Greatest Show on Earth" on the road? Ringling Bros. seems to think so. Circus officials have publicly stated that they will stop touring with elephants if bullhooks and leg chains are made illegal.

Let's say this happens. And I hope that it does. Year after year I've stood on our campus and watched how the elephants are tied up with leg chains in the Patriot Center parking lot while Ringling Bros. employees

openly strike them with bullhooks. Henry Ringling got it right when he called these practices "brutalities." So yes, I certainly hope that Judge Emmet Sullivan of the U.S. Federal District Court in Washington declares the use of bullhooks and leg chains illegal.

But what happens with the elephants once their leg chains are unlocked? Often, in cases where circuses are found guilty of animal abuse, they will offload and sell the animals to other entertainment venues, zoos or captive breeding facilities. I do not believe that these are appropriate environments for traumatized, over-worked animals. It would be better for each one of the elephants to be retired to an animal sanctuary such as The Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald, Tennessee. It is here where they will get the treatment and environment that healthy elephants require. Located on 2,700 acres, The Elephant Sanctuary was specifically developed to provide for the needs of endangered Asian and African elephants. The Elephant Sanctuary is home to a herd of rescued elephants and is qualified to open its arms and take in the magnificent animals that Ringling Bros. neglects and

abuses on a daily basis.

As educator and theorist Paulo Freire taught, "washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral." The injustice of Ringling Bros.'s abuse calls us to action. In addition to the courts making the use of force and weapons illegal, every member of our Mason community can take a stand to ensure that justice is served for the animals. We can all make the educated choice not to purchase tickets to the circus when they arrive on our campus in April.

We can also do the animals one better by joining together to demand that George Mason University and the Patriot Center no longer be a party to abuse by hosting the circus every year. Many countries and entire states have banned or restricted the use of animals in entertainment. Sears, Visa, MasterCard, General Mills and Burger King each terminated their sponsorship of Ringling Bros once they learned about the animal abuse. This ongoing trial signals that it is time for Mason and the Patriot Center to do the same.

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Free, Tickets Required **CH**

GMU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Featuring GMU Alumni Soloists
Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 8 p.m. **CH**
\$15 Adults; \$10 Students/Seniors
Limited Free Student Tickets Available Feb. 10

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Friday, Feb. 20 at 8 p.m.
\$38, \$30, \$19 **CH**
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Saturday, Feb. 21 at 8 p.m.
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DRUMLINE LIVE

Sunday, Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.
\$44, \$36, \$22 **CH**
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GMU WIND SYMPHONY & SYMPHONIC BAND

Winter Band Concert
Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 8 p.m.
\$15 Adults; \$10 Students/Seniors **CH**
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\$12 Adults; \$8 Students/Seniors **HT**
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PARSONS DANCE

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