

THE MICHIGAN REVIEW

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Ex-Terrorist Event Meets Expectations, Sparks Controversy

By LINDSEY DODGE, '10

After weeks of public relations blitzes and growing anticipation on campus, the speeches by three ex-terrorists at Rackham Auditorium on January 30 largely lived up to the expected hype and controversy. A planned walk out, police-escorted exit for a heckler, and relatively enthusiastic audience response characterized the raucous evening.

The campus chapter of Young Americans for Freedom, often maligned for their confrontational and controversial tactics, sponsored the event, filling the roughly 1,200-seat auditorium. The general audience had to arrive an hour early to obtain seating. By the beginning of the ex-terrorists' testimony, nearly every seat in the auditorium was filled.

The audience was not solely comprised of supporters and the interested. Word had spread on campus in the past few days about planned

protests. Yellow graffiti had been scrawled over the many advertisements around campus, and as people walked into the auditorium, students in yellow handed out flyers as "information about the event." The flyer read, in big block letters, "WALK OUT (in silence)," and seemed to oppose not the event itself, but YAF's involvement.

Despite this, there was no imposition to the commencement of the event. Kamal Saleem, Zachariah Anani, and Walid Shoebat came to speak about their experiences and to warn about the dangers of radical Islam to not only the Middle East, but to America as well.

Kamal Saleem spoke first, setting up an idea repeated throughout the speeches; they are speaking to American audiences to inform Americans, not just Middle-Easterners. In his

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Asian Applicants May Have Most to Gain in Post-MCRI Admissions

By DAVID BRAIT, '10

WHEN THE CLASS of 2011 arrives on campus this fall, many students may expect to see more Caucasian students than in prior years; however, they could be wrong. Proposal 2 is expected to bring dramatic changes in admissions and in the cultural makeup of the student body, but Asian students may stand to benefit the most.

A recent article in the *New York Times* suggests an interesting scenario which could potentially apply to Michigan. The story investigated the effect of Proposition 209, which was similar to Michigan's Prop. 2, on admissions at the University of California public university system. The article focused on the top school in the system, the University of California at Berkeley.

Since Prop 209, which was passed in 1996, the enrollment of Asian students at Berkeley has skyrocketed at the expense of African Americans and Hispanics. Berkeley's freshman class this year is 46 percent Asian, 3.6 percent of African American, 11 percent Hispanic and 29 percent Caucasian. Caucasian, Hispanic and Black admittance percentages are all much lower than their overall population proportions in

California. Put simply, Asian students are statistically overrepresented at Berkeley.

Is this scenario likely to take place at Michigan? The admissions office would not engage in any admissions forecasting. "We don't know what Proposal 2's impact is going to be vis-a-vis the Asian community, and defiantly cannot speculate at this point," a University official said.

The numbers suggest the possibility. In Michigan, Asians only make up 2.57 percent of the state population compared to California where they make up 12.4 percent. Asian students make up some 11.5 percent of the student body here at U-M.

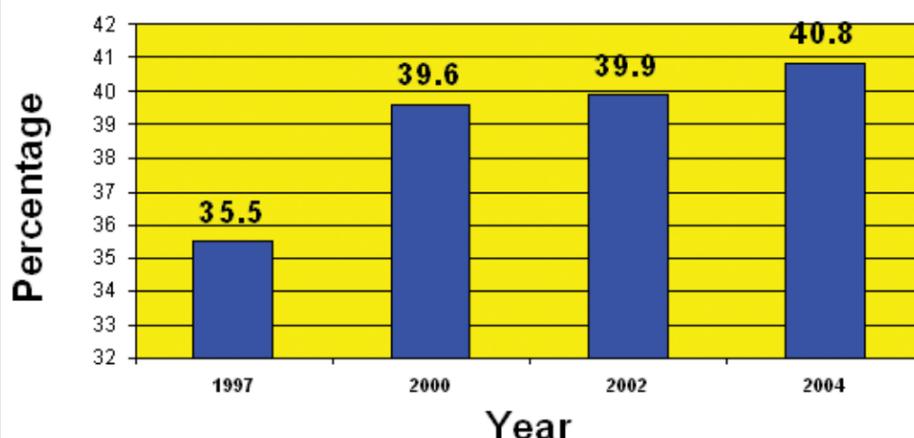
However, a study done by the Center for Equal Opportunity reported that Asian Americans were admitted at a rate of 54 percent, much lower than Hispanic (79 percent) and Black (74 percent) students, despite having an average SAT score that was 140 points higher than Hispanics and 240 points higher than Blacks.

These admittance percentages are not

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Asian Admittees to UC-Berkeley After Prop 209
Percentage of total admittees



Talking Terror With Three Ex-Terrorists

By NICK CHEOLAS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

IT IS A MEMORY few American children can relate to: carrying the body of a friend back from the battlefield.

But it is a vivid memory for Kamal Saleem.

Born to a large Sunni Muslim family, Saleem was raised in the culture of Jihad. By age 7, he was out of school, and soon became involved with the Muslim Brotherhood, where he worked to recruit other young Palestinian boys into the PLO.

Walid Shoebat and Zachariah Anani have similar memories from lives that were once filled with hatred and vengeance. Shoebat spent time in a Jerusalem prison. Meanwhile, Anani had racked up 223 "points" as a young militant – points awarded for successful kills.

Decades later, the three men have long abandoned their ideology of hate. On Tuesday night, they took to the stage at Rackham Auditorium in Ann Arbor to examine that ideology.

The men are reluctant to discuss their backgrounds. Constant threats and attacks have plagued the three men and their fami-

"We were racists when we were terrorists. How is it when I kill Jews, I'm a freedom fighter, but now that I love [all faiths], I'm a racist?"

-Walid Shoebat

lies. But they do not hesitate to speak candidly about what they perceive to be a grave threat to civilization and the western world: radical Islam.

They came "to define the problem – not just Al Qaeda, but the principles" behind radical Islam, said Walid Shoebat. "We fight those who interpret the Koran in a literal fashion."

Many Americans fail to understand the principles behind radical Islam, the three contend. This, in turn, hinders America's ability to confront radical Islam.

"The way Americans identify the problem is wrong," Shoebat said, adding that Americans too often – and incorrectly – attribute the cause of terrorism to things like poverty or foreign policy. His new book, bluntly titled *Why We Want to Kill You*, attempts to correct this misconception. It will hit stores in February 2007.

Zachariah Anani agrees. "The Western world occupied [the Middle East] in the 1950s and 60s, but look at the doctrine of Muslim schools in the 1800s," he said. That doctrine, he said, preaches an ideology of hatred and intolerance. Go back even further, Anani urged, and one will find that the ideology of the Koran predates modern political problems.

Despite the criticism, protest, and threats

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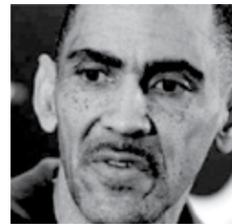
3 Good Weeks...

1. Troy, MI

Ironically lands on our "good week" list. After the city council tried to limit Hooters' expansion in the city by not giving the popular restraint chain a liquor license, Hooters has decided to keep two restaurants open until the license comes through. Troy officials allege that Hooters doesn't present the type of image the city would like to convey. All this from the city that boasts Big Beaver Rd., Exit 69.



2. Black Football Coaches



Did you know that Lovie Smith and Tony Dungy are black?! Did you know that they were the first black coaches to reach the Super Bowl?! Did you know that Tony Dungy was the first black coach to win a Super Bowl?!

3. Glue manufacturers

This is the most celebrity attention Elmer's has gotten since that damn goat died.

The Michigan Review Date Auction

In true PC spirit, a recent campus date auction - put on to raise money for charity - has sparked controversy and comparisons to slave auctions and Nazism.

Since we at the Review have often been called Nazis and racists, we felt it fitting to put on our own little date auction. In fact, we're giving you a sneak peek at our leading candidates.

University President Mary Sue Coleman (available to "diverse" students only)

A whirlwind night of multicultural dining out. The evening starts at Raja Rani, moves to San Fu, and then to Totoro. Then, you can retire to a couch in a multicultural lounge in a dorm to watch a copy of *Glory*.

Football Coach Lloyd Carr

The first 45 minutes are extremely conservative, but Carr opens up in the last 15 minutes of the date, taking desperate shots downfield in an attempt to score.

Basketball Coach Tommy Amaker

The opposite of Coach Carr, Amaker gets out to a great start in the first five minutes. He then proceeds to sit there doing nothing, looking confused, and refusing to make any attempts to score for the rest of the night.

YAF Vice President Ryan Fantuzzi

Shows up to the date boasting of his American flag thong.

Former Daily Editorial Page Editor

Chris Zbrozek

Date is ruined by hours of crying due to crushing liberal guilt and the use of pickup lines he stole from the Review.

...and 3 Bad Weeks

1. Joe Biden

A rough start for the Delaware Senator/Presidential candidate. In his defense, he didn't seem to mean what he said. Now, not only are his 2008 hopes dashed, but he has to live with the image of the Rev. Al Sharpton in the bathtub.

2. White Football Coaches



Nick Saban to have acclimated well to Alabama after calling a LSU fan a "coon-ass." In turn, Saban's ass has found the hot seat rather quickly, as he faces harsh criticism from 'Bama's Ethnic Studies department. Roll tide!

3. Barbaro

Our second "bad week" candidate who had a bit of trouble getting out of the starting gate. At least Barbaro won't be around to deal with the repercussions of his bad week. After a long battle, his condition was permanently downgraded from "critical" to "glue."



Serpent's Tooth

The founder of Ramen Noodles died recently. Family members were overjoyed to find the catering for the funeral only cost sixty-eight cents.

It was recently announced that KFC personality Colonel Sanders will be featured on postage stamps. Sadly, the stamps will not feature the Colonel's special home recipe, nor will they be available as extra-crispy. Ironically, the stamps will have more health value than KFC's products.

A University official recently compared a charity date auction on campus to slave auctions. We agree. Except for the fact that the auctionees volunteered, will be paid millions of dollars next year, and will be eating burritos. Yeah, exactly the same. Yep, sounds like slavery to us.

Florida announced plans to get rid of electronic balloting. After the most recent elections, state officials received complaints from a majority of residents who said the light from the computer screens hurt their cataracts.

Rush Limbaugh was recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by a conservative legal group. The group's president praised Limbaugh by saying, "I've never seen someone so at peace than Mr. Limbaugh on pain meds."

Hillary Clinton might actually win the Presidency. We're sure Bill is extremely excited about being first lady.

The Pentagon is the big winner in President Bush's proposed budget for next year. "It's great," says one spokesman, "because we've been looking forward to the new hexagon design for years."

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words, "Millions died for the Constitution of America. We love this country...If we don't like her, then we should leave her land."

He was interrupted again by an "If we don't like her, we should change her" from the back. His only response to most interruptions was to laugh, but to this particular one he replied, "The airport is not far from here."

He described, as did all the speakers, the virulent anti-Judeo-Christian sentiment saturating the Middle East, himself raised in the Islamic Resistance Movement. Their recruiting was mostly done in mosques, and "the Koran was their constitution." Although constantly hissed and heckled, Saleem received applause as well. The biggest eruption occurred after he asked, "Why are the Muslims in America not protesting the extremists of their faith?"

Zachariah Anani, the second speaker, received more tepid applause due to overtones of Christian proselytizing in his speech. During his youth, he said, he accumulated over 223 kills, and stated that life meant very little to him. When he was 16, he converted to Christianity, and he was tried, convicted, and beaten in his mosque, according to Islamic doctrine.

It was at this point that nearly 200 protestors walked out, rather peacefully. Anani shrugged it off, joking that, "American Idol starts in 20 minutes anyways."

The third speaker, Walid Shoebat, focused the group's speeches to American audiences, describing how he was paid by Middle Eastern governments to recruit members to their cause during college, advertising themselves as a Middle-Eastern culture club. He argued that poverty and frustration were poor explanations for Islamic troubles. India is poor, he said, and they do not have suicide bombers. Jews get frustrated, he continued, yet they do not blow themselves up in Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.



YAF Vice President Ryan Fantuzzi reads a warning to hecklers as a DPS officer looks on.

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that follow the three men, they insist their words are meant to help foster an understanding of Islam.

"The number one thing to know: Who are the Muslim People?" said Saleem. And just as Americans struggle to understand Muslims, Muslims in the Middle East struggle to understand the West.

"All [Muslims] know is how to be a Muslim," he said.

Part of the misunderstanding has to do with the characterization of radical Islam. The threat cannot be characterized as primarily religious or primarily political because, as the three men stressed, there is no difference between the two in Islam.

"You can't separate politics from religion [in Islam]," Shoebat said.

"Islam is a government. Wherever Islam dwells, it has to be the supreme power,"



Zachariah Anani speaks with audience members following the event

Shoebat's speech seemed to ignite the most rancor from the remaining protestors.

After inviting the loudest heckler up to the stage, he told her, "You try to carry a sign in Saudi Arabia that says 'Suicide bombing is wrong.'" He was adamantly pro-Israel, which provoked heckles about his being a Zionist. To one persistent heckler, he replied, "I would love to debate you and squish you like a worm up here."

While the speakers were generally afforded a right to speak, the three men were interrupted by various staged protests and impromptu heckles. YAF vice-president Ryan Fantuzzi introduced the speakers, saying the event was designed for "people who support peace and freedom." Audience members in yellow stood and applauded.

Sirene, a spokesperson for the demonstrators, stated the reasoning behind the protest. "YAF promotes discrimination against Arabs and Muslims," she said, "The event is not educational." She was impressed with the turnout, saying "All of campus has rallied in support." Forty-two minutes into the presentation, during Anani's speech, about 200 students in yellow rather silently exited the auditorium. The exit had been anticipated by YAF and event coordinators, and the police presence was pronounced.

One particularly noisy heckler in the back announced her presence by yelling "fascist" before a word had been spoken. She heckled the speakers loudly throughout the evening, staying after the exit of the yellow-shirted protestors.

Her heckles culminated during Shoebat's speech, when after calling him a Zionist, he challenged the woman to a debate. She paused, then said "I won't debate you,"

said Saleem.

Islam's incompatibility with secular Western governments has been displayed around the globe. Even in the US, Saleem said, Muslims tend to live in clusters.

But Islam's incompatibility with secular cultures has also led to a dichotomy within Islam. There are, as Anani said, "Two Korans" – one peaceful, and one violent. The problem, Anani explained, comes from contradictions within the Koran.

"The Koran said 'there is no compulsion to religion,'" but then goes on to say "seize them [non-believers] and kill them wherever you find them," Anani noted.

Islam teaches believers "you have your religion, and I have mine," Anani explained. He struggles to reconcile this phrase with the death threats he receives for converting to Christianity.

But Anani is also clear when placing the blame for acts of terror.

"Radical Muslims attack because of

to which he replied, "Because you're chicken shit!"

Eventually, after the woman continued, Fantuzzi took to the stage to read the University's statement on the University's free speech policy. After the woman persisted, a follow-up statement, also apparently sanctioned by the University, allowed the woman to be removed. DPS escorted the woman from the auditorium, as she yelled, "This is the University of Michigan's free speech policy!"

Keith Davies, a spokesman for the speakers, said that he was excited by the "full crowd" and the "warm reception" from those who did support the speakers' message. He explained that the real job was to deliver the message and educate students. Their next stop is UC-Davis, where they expect an even bigger turnout.

Professor Robert Packer, who teaches on the Arab-Israeli conflict at the University of Michigan, also stated that "people had to be careful not to conflate fundamentalist Islam with the entire religion." He also defined Islamic fundamentalism as "a political movement that arose from frustration where other politics failed." He agreed that it is a threat, in particular to Egypt, and poses a legitimate concern worthy of "proper debate."

The ex-terrorists spoke mostly of their personal experiences and beliefs, and generally avoided hot-button issues such as the Iraq war and American affairs in the Middle-East. Shoebat concluded his speech with a line characteristic of the evening, saying, "We will have peace when the Arabs love their children more than we love peace." **MR**

what the book said," he said. "It's the doctrine, not Muslims."

Thus, the three argued, the problem cannot be confronted solely through military means.

"We have to know where we're going [with a military solution]," Saleem said. "We can't do Iraq on and on."

Anani agreed. "The military solution did not go all the way...we have to encourage the young generation not to be taught hatred."

While the three men say understanding radical Islam is the key to combating it, they propose less militaristic means of confronting the ideology of hatred. Working to educate Muslims, Anani claims, will be more successful and more peaceful.

"[Radical] Islam thrives on people with a lack of understanding and knowledge," he said.

"We have to weed out radical Islam," Shoebat added. "Radical Islam is a cancer."

Wearing Yellow, Walking Out

BY ADAM PAUL, '08

LAST WEEK, THE student group Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) hosted three speakers to talk about their experiences as "ex-terrorists." The event drew protest from around campus.

"The walk out is not a protest, we use demonstration [to describe it]. We want a peaceful walkout," said walk out coalition member Andrew Gutting. Gutting, a second year engineering student, became involved with the demonstration through the Arab Unity Movement. This group was formed from the Arab Student Association's commitment to being a "purely cultural and purely social organization." He and others wanted an outlet for Arab students to speak out on political issues and formed the new group.

Gutting explained that since registering the Arab Unity Movement as a student group in January, the ex-terrorist event had been a big concern. In forming the walk out coalition, groups such as the Expect Respect campaign, the Black Student Union, and the South Asian Awareness Network were all contacted. While Gutting explained that some of these groups were unable to officially sponsor the coalition due to time constraints, he said the response has been "quite impressive."

Gutting believed that the speakers had been advertised as representatives of a larger community. "These three ex-terrorists do not represent Muslim community and do not represent the Arab community both in the United States and abroad," Gutting explained. Yet he felt that the event had been advertised to make it look as if the speakers represented the larger community. He feared that the event would only serve to further "tokenize" the Arab and Muslim communities.

Gutting argued that the event too closely linked terrorism with religious and cultural identity. "They [YAF] likes to put people in a box and then label the box," Gutting explained. He believes the event's approach is too simple and instead explained that "terrorism is much more than you can attribute to a holy book." He elaborated that other religions, such as Christianity, have scriptural

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The three men are no strangers to controversy, and Tuesday's event was no different. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination pressured U-M officials to reconsider hosting the event, and at least one of the three men faced death threats in recent weeks.

YAF - the student group sponsoring the event - faced criticism as well, YAF organizer Ryan Fantuzzi said. Posters advertising the event were defaced and torn down across campus, and group members faced the usual accusations of racism and xenophobia.

"I was really careful about getting these guys, because I know there are guys out there who are racist and hateful, and that wasn't our intention," said Fantuzzi.

Shoebat responded sharply to the charges of racism.

"We were racists when we were terrorists. How is it when I kill Jews, I'm a freedom fighter, but now that I love [all faiths], I'm a racist?" **MR**

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Ex-Terrorist Protest Exposes an Inconvenient Truth

EVENTS ANALYZING THE Israeli-Palestinian conflict have long provoked strong outbursts of emotion on campus. Last week's "3-Ex Terrorist" event was no different, as hundreds of protestors, adorned in yellow, walked out of Rackham Auditorium in unison.

The conflict surrounding such events is common on a campus so polarized on the Israel-Palestine issue. While the walkout was rather peaceful and silent, a few hecklers remained, doing their best to interrupt the event with screams disparaging the "Zionist conspiracy."

But the entire scene was indicative of the hypocrisy surrounding the purported desire for "dialogue" on this campus. The debate on this particular issue has descended into little more than a "Zionist" vs. "Terrorist" name-calling contest.

In any event, it seems as if the groups supporting the walk out were grasping for straws when detailing their criticism of the event. Little yellow sheets of paper handed out at the Ex-Terrorist event detailed the actions of the event-sponsoring group Young Americans for Freedom – at Michigan State. The Arab-American Anti Discrimination Committee doubted that the three speakers were ever terrorists. In an interview with the *Review*, Andrew Gutting, a student who helped organize the walkout, criticized the three speakers for failing to make distinctions between peaceful and militant Muslims.

But that distinction was made. In an interview with the *Review* last week, all three speakers spoke of a dichotomy within Islam, specifically mentioning "two Korans" based on interpretation. And if the protesters had stayed long enough to hear the three speakers, they would have heard Walid Shoebat specifically indicate that "we have to differentiate between peaceful and radical Islam," and repeatedly implore liberal Muslims to take action against extremism.

But the protestors did walk out, confident that the speakers were spouting virulent anti-Muslim views, and confident that a YAF-sponsored event could only profess hatred. In doing so, they subjected the speakers and YAF to the same prejudice and intolerance that these groups so often protest.

Not to be lost in all this is the University's responsibility for such conflicts. The University of Michigan – through its overwhelming focus on race as the be-all-end-all of everything that ever existed – has, in and of itself, served to generalize groups. The increasingly Balkanized racial scene here at Michigan breeds the sort of racial solidarity – and, in many cases, animosity – that characterize controversial events.

It should also be noted that this focus has done nothing to improve the University's culture of "diversity," nor has it done much to further the free and open debate that so many groups seemingly desire. These groups may sincerely want to begin a dialogue on controversial issues – so long as that dialogue is conducted on their terms and reaches their preferred conclusion.

In the end, the opposition to the event seemed like much ado about nothing. The speakers spoke largely about their own experiences, and only the most ignorant of listeners could have viewed the experiences of the speakers as representative of all Muslims. Those who walked out of the event essentially guaranteed that no dialogue would occur, instead dusting off the old charges of "racism" and "xenophobia."

Walid Shoebat, Kamal Saleem, and Zachariah Anani came with a simple message: that Americans must understand radical Islam in order to combat radical Islam. The controversy surrounding the largely-benign event was inductive of the fact that these men have their work cut out for them. College students today have such overzealous racism-detectors that even the truth evokes the standard charges of "racism." But events such as the Ex-Terrorist are part of the search for that truth – even if that truth may be inconvenient. **MR**

Lessons to Learn from Pfizer Pullout

THE PAST DECADE has not been economically kind for citizens of the Motor City and surrounding towns. Whether it has been the woeful performances of the "Big Three" automotive companies, massive job losses, or the growing exodus of middle-class workers to greener pastures in other states, one would be hard-pressed to consider the economic health of the region anything else than "critical."

The tough times continued for southeastern Michigan with the January 22 announcement from pharmaceutical giant Pfizer that it was closing its Ann Arbor research facility. The Pfizer closing has directly hit the area, taking away one of its prized possessions, and the city's largest taxpayer. There are some lessons from this closing, however, that are important to point out if we are to expect any recovery from this significant blow.

While the effects of the closing have been well-examined, the reasons for the closing have hardly been discussed at all. Pfizer has projected losses from patent expiration as \$14 billion between 2005 and 2007. Additionally, their patent for Lipitor, the world's best-selling drug, expires in 2010. Pfizer fought a bitter battle in 2006 with India-based Ranbaxy Laboratories over the validity of their Lipitor patent, and ultimately won.

This case, which was decided in the Supreme Court, reveals a huge problem for companies such as Pfizer. Generic drug companies like Ranbaxy simply wait for patents to expire, and jump on them when they are free. Pfizer then must alter their entire business plan so that profits do not rely heavily on drugs like Lipitor, which bring in billions in profits.

Pharmaceutical giants such as Pfizer are already faced with the extremely damaging and burdensome drug-approval process of the FDA. But Pfizer itself bears a large chunk of responsibility for their troubles. Testing of Torcetrapib, a cholesterol and heart disease drug, was halted after a 60% increase in deaths of test subjects. The highly publicized affair hurt profits and sales after Pfizer recommended that patients stop taking the drug "immediately." The pharmaceutical industry in general was strongly affected by the recall of Vioxx, an anti-inflammatory drug produced by Merck, after it was found that patients were susceptible to heart attacks.

Unfortunately, these pressures are compounded by the populist cries of politicians to create a universal health care system. Senator and 2008-Presidential hopeful Barack Obama, has weighed in on the state of the health care industry. Discussing the utopian idea of universal health care, Obama notes: "For too long, this debate has been stunted by what I call the smallness of our politics – the idea that there isn't much we can agree on or do about the major challenges facing our country... Another, more controversial area we need to look at is how much of our health care spending is going toward the record-breaking profits earned by the drug and health care industry."

Obama treads in dangerous waters when attacking companies' profits and boasting his support for universal health care, which is an enormously burdensome practice for large industries.

It is unfortunate that both the recent troubles of both the Big Three automakers and Pfizer disproportionately hurt Michigan, and more specifically, the economy of Ann Arbor. For years, Michigan has relied on these companies' for tax revenues and thousands of jobs. It is neither unfair nor irrational to place some of the blame on institutions such as the incredibly-restrictive approval process of the FDA, the complex patent laws which often hurt drug companies, or health-care costs required by automakers. And while a solution is certainly needed fast, the cries by politicians campaigning for universal health care and more legislation to decrease profits will only complicate the matter. **MR**

'U' Would be Wise to Invest in Detroit

WITH THE PASSAGE of Proposal 2, the University of Michigan must achieve diversity without minority preferences. This means that the university must now focus its efforts on expanding the pool of qualified minority applicants in order to keep the student body diverse.

The university's main focus should be drawing students from Detroit, which has the greatest concentration of African-Americans among major cities, in addition to thriving Hispanic and Middle Eastern populations. Detroit also has a failing public school system and underperforming economy; it is not a stretch to say that these two facts are connected.

A greater investment of money and human capital by the university into Detroit will help the city while the university helps itself by maintaining diversity.

In 1998, the National Institute for Literacy deemed 47 percent of Detroiters "functionally illiterate." The ranks of college-educated people in Detroit are low, especially compared to the levels in most of the area's suburbs. Furthermore, the cash-strapped Detroit Public School System loses thousands of students to charter schools and suburban schools of choice every year.

The University of Michigan could be just the party to offer a solution for inner-city students.

Ohio State, for example, created a magnet high school in Columbus to prepare potential applicants by bringing up science and math skills. A *New York Times* piece reported on this program, and also on how OSU also placed educators in under-performing primary schools to encourage students and their families to start planning for college.

Our rival school to the south has a shown commitment to the inner city that U-M should imitate. There is nothing stopping U-M, with its abundant financial and human resources, from investing in Detroit in a similar manner. School of Education teaching candidates interested in urban education could be mobilized in such an effort. Connectivity between Detroit and Ann Arbor, always a limiting step regarding this topic, could soon improve with a commuter rail line between the two cities close to becoming a reality.

The university must go beyond small, token moves if it is to raise the bar among Detroit students and put more students on track for college by changing the culture of education in the inner city. Meanwhile, it must make a commensurate, and equally creative, effort to enable more inner city students to actually attend this institution.

Mary Sue Coleman, in the *New York Times* article, hedged at the idea of guaranteeing admission to a particular percentage of top high school graduates across the state, because the majority of these would be white. If the university only guaranteed admission to top graduates from Detroit and other inner city high schools, minorities would be the primary beneficiaries.

Detroit already has multiple high-achieving high schools, such as Cass Tech and Renaissance, and while many are admitted for their merit, there are no guarantees that they can afford U-M tuition. While the university cannot specify race as a criteria, it can establish a scholarship fund for high-achieving Detroit Public School graduates; this would create a tremendous incentive (i.e. receiving discounted tuition for a topic public school) for Detroit high schools students to stay focused and get good grades.

In making inroads in Detroit, the university has the ultimate chance to get creative, and back up its 'diversity' and 'urban commitments' rhetoric with something other than a small, symbolic facility on Woodward Avenue in the city's midtown. Detroit is experiencing a resurgence, but a full rebirth will require higher standards in educating its youth. U-M has a special calling in enabling this; let's hope it rises to the challenge. **MR**

■ **The Deep End**

The New Era of Gender Relations

THE DAYS OF the so-called “MRS” degree for college-aged women are long-passed.

Over the past half-century, there have been extraordinary changes in the American social fabric, particularly in regards to issues of sex and gender. But a debate lingers among various contrarians and social critics, who question whether the sweeping changes of the past, done in the name of “freedom” or “liberation,” have had a net-positive effect.

The *New York Times* recently published a story on how, for the first time in the modern era, a majority of women are living without a spouse. I’m betting that number only climbs.

Women are a slight majority on campus, constituting 50.5 percent of students here at Michigan. Nationally, women are a much stronger majority of degree-earning students. Indeed, some schools have undertaken efforts to make male applicants eligible for affirmative action in college admissions. Say what you will about a disputed seventy-six cents to the dollar statistic, but there’s a good deal of parity about which we can be satisfied. If the glass ceiling still exists, it must be an awfully thin pane.

In an article in the current issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Jon Zobenica shows how this vast social change has affected men in a profound way, too. Zobenica points out the paradigm shift that has even affected men’s magazines like *Playboy* and *Maxim*. He points that even Hugh Hefner’s



**MICHAEL
O'BRIEN**

empire, with its libertine ethics, prized class and charm by men over the kind of hyper-testosterone lifestyle promoted by publications like *Maxim* and *FHM*. Men today, writes Zobenica, “take control of defeat by forfeiting the game rather than risk another losing effort [to feminists].”

The point is that instead of ‘manning up’ to engage in some sort of broad cultural awareness and debate over the shift men have retreated into a ‘Neverland’ of masculinity, ogling caricatures of women, mistaking their actions as a rebellion against common convention.

Truth is, men and women have leaped a lot of the traditional hurdles. Most men are unthreatened by the career women, and if they are, they’re usually marginalized, not celebrated (except by the *Maxim* crowd). And women aren’t conspiring to stick it to men, after millennia of patriarchy. Yes, second-wave feminism screwed up a lot of how we’re acculturated these days, but the social environment isn’t exactly inhospitable to men.

The fact is, we’re both wrong, men and women, alike.

Our parents (or at least their older siblings) thought the traditions upheld by generations, all the way through our grandparents, were no longer venerable. And in some degrees, maybe they were. But those reformers swung the pendulum too far in the other direction. You can’t create social change overnight without expecting some sort of backlash that is, sometimes, overwhelming.

More of an effort has been made to accommodate this generation’s women than any other before us. Just look around at the University; there’s no lack of programs and set-asides that particularly target women. Culture celebrates professional women. Accordingly, that more women are living solo is a continuation of the, “I am woman. Hear me roar,” ethic.

Men are no less mistaken about their position in society. The *Atlantic’s* article hits the nail on the head in many ways. Too many men have shied away from having to match the argument put forth by feminists a generation ago, and have instead reacted with an ‘I’ll show you!’ mentality, proving their masculinity by showing how much they can objectify women.

In short, men and women have retreated to their respective corners, more-or-less convinced of the superiority of their independence. Say what you will about the generations of tradition predating the mid-20th century, at least their gender schemes were cohesive and consistent.

The subtle assumption of our culture that men and women can live perfectly happy independently, without having to engage the other, is a threat to our social fabric. It’s our differences (yes, men and women are different) that we should celebrate, not the extreme equality (read: androgyny) we’ve pursued.

As college students, these thoughts aren’t far from our minds. Women fret over whether their college education will be for naught when the home pregnancy test reads positive. And most men on campus come close to hyperventilation when we hear a friend of ours is getting engaged or (even worse!) married. The thought that it is relations between the sexes that ultimately ends our fun strikes with bitter irony.

But instead of responding by acting embattled and retreating to our respective corners, we can reconstruct a social fabric that emphasizes self-interest first and self-sacrifice last.

The pendulum might have swung, but it need not swing back to another extreme. **MR**

■ **Big Talk**

Walkout Participants Can’t Handle the Truth

THEY SPOKE TOO strongly. They spoke too frankly. They spoke from experience. Their words confirmed that Islamic fundamentalism is more widespread than we are led to believe, and that Islamo-facism is a rebirth of Nazism. They urged liberal Muslims to rise up against extremism; they defended the existence of Israel; and they preached peace.

With such words coming from three men who had once been entangled in violence and hate, who could not find the stories of the three former terrorists who spoke on campus last week compelling? Who would not want to hear their first-hand accounts?

Plenty of people. Some of the people who walked out of the event or heckled the speakers probably wanted to remain blissfully ignorant of the fact that not all of Islam is peaceful; others may have been against Israel and all it stands for, as exhibited by the anti-Semitic heckler who was removed by the police. Most of those opposed to the event probably just wanted to spite the conservative group which organized this landmark event. Regardless, they all displayed intolerance.

Unfortunately, this intolerance has been the hallmark of this campus lately. The sort of intolerance generally seen here grows out of the self-righteousness and holier-than-thou attitudes of some students and Ann Arbor residents.

Activist liberals on this campus learn from the best. First among them is the University President, who displayed all of these traits in her smug response to the results of Proposal 2 in November.

The topic at hand, though, remains the fiasco of last Tuesday night. I thought it was the most educational event I attended while at U-M. I, along with the interested and honest students and visitors that stayed through the two-hour event, learned about the culture of fundamentalism in the Middle East.

The Palestinian and Lebanese speakers spoke frankly about their upbringing; they translated the sayings about the Jews and Americans that their teachers and fathers had taught them, and they also quoted the verses from the Quran that are important to fundamentalists preaching the destruction of the Jews and Christians. They were taught that Jews were “children of monkeys and pigs.” This animalistic portrayal, which minimizes the humanity of an entire race, was highlighted by an anecdote from Walid Shoebat, who witnessed an Israeli soldier be lynched, with his organs and body parts strewn about by supportive townspeople in celebration.

One of the speakers first went into a battle, carrying ammunition, at age seven. Another killed a man at 14. Yet all three of them abandoned the cause, and now they harshly criticize the people they used to work alongside, in addition to now defending the cause of Israel, and questioning the idea of a Palestinian state.

The students who walked out did so before the halfway point of the presentation, and they missed a lot of statements that would have made them just a bit squeamish, to

be sure. Zachariah Anani characterized Islam as a religion of aggression which has had a 1400 year history of violence. Shoebat wondered out loud why only Muslim Palestinians commit suicide bombings, and not any of the many Christian Palestinians; this observation dispels the idea that economics and poverty drive the terrorism, he said. All of the speakers condemned the backwardness of fundamentalist communities, especially as it pertains to the treatment of women.

With particular vociferousness, Shoebat maintained that Islamic fascism is a new version of Nazism, and suggested that its worst effects could still be ahead. Such statements were countered by cries of “just like Zionism” from the heckler who was eventually removed.

All of these strong statements made by the former terrorists seem to debunk the rosier outlooks of Islam and Arab states that many in academia are led to support. It became clear that someone who grew up amid fundamentalism has license to call Islam an oft-warlike religion, but a ‘learned’ professor at a school like ours cannot, because of political correctness. Likewise, a former terrorist can tell us that more Muslims than we think are fundamentalist and support the destruction of Jews and Christians, but a professor can not.

This is exactly why the event was an educational one. It clarified the vague, politically correct descriptions of the Middle East taught in class, and it painted in vivid colors the picture of hate and racism which are at the root of fundamentalism. This is precisely why the protestors left halfway through. The truth was too harsh—so harsh that it could not be tolerated. **MR**



**BRIAN
BIGLIN**

MRS Degree: Alive and Well

By LINDSEY DODGE, '10

I HATE TO SAY it, but the feminists have a point. Looking around at the Michigan campus, there is still a decent contingency of women who are pursuing the MRS degree quite intently. Rabid feminists like to point the finger at men, but it’s not men continuing this academic tradition. The answer lies within women themselves.

Traditionally, women had a lot of catching up to do. Even with the successes of the civil rights movement, there is the oft-quot-

ed 75 cents to a dollar in terms of earning power. The glass ceiling certainly still exists, but now we don’t have the luxury of accusing sexist male executives. It’s not glass; it’s white satin that keeps women from reaching the top in their respective careers.

In theory, marriage and a career are not mutually exclusive. But some of the arguments made in the 1950s have surprising resonance today. “Who will stay home and raise the kids” was as valid a question then as it is now. Marriage without kids is very unusual, as is a top women executive, because that position generally requires that a woman stick around through the “baby years.”

Women appear to be making strides in education. There are more female than male college graduates. Yet wait until the female college graduate marries and wants to raise a child. What are the chances that the man will put aside his career to stay at home? Would you?

This purely feminine conflict is the crux behind the recent increase in single women, who now outnumber married couples. Marriage was intended for the procreation of children, and we are living in a culture where no one wants to do diaper-duty.

In contrast, there is a reactive movement of women seeking traditional relationships,

when the rules between the sexes are clear and made sense. Most women want simple relationships. But some of them are actually willing to put aside their careers for this philosophical security. U-M is not immune from this problem. These are the MRS-degree girls, and as grating as it is, who is to say that they are wrong?

The feminist movement was, and is, about choice. It seeks to give women the same freedom as men have to make decisions and control the future. It seems that women, not men, need to come to terms with the decisions of other women— whichever side of the spectrum they fall under. **MR**

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Detroit Groups Work to Exceed Expectations for City

By JONNY SLEMROD, '10

OVER THE PAST two centuries, the Detroit River was one of the busiest in the world; home to prominent manufacturing and shipping industries. Thousands of factories, warehouses, and parking lots were erected along the water to accommodate Detroit's booming economy.

But the waterfront economy's prosperity steadily declined during the 20th century, leaving industrial sites abandoned. Little by little, this property decayed, leaving Detroiters with little more than a junkyard of industrial waste to look at, all along the water. Residents had no access to the waterfront, and the once-beautiful landscape was seemingly forgotten.

Last week, campus group The Detroit Project brought representatives from the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy (DRFC) and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) for a discussion of the riverfront's development, entitled, Detroit Progress: Development Beyond Expectations.

The Detroit RiverFront Conservancy (DRFC) was founded by recommendation of Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick in late 2002, when the waterfront lay virtually decrepit. The Conservancy, a nonprofit group dedicated to the "establishment, improvement, operation, maintenance, security and programming of the Detroit Riverfront," developed a revitalization plan for the waterfront which spans a ten-year period.

The first phase of the redevelopment plan focuses on developing a pedestrian walkway along the east riverfront area, which spans from Hart Plaza to Gabriel Richard Park.

Leonard Marszalek, the DRFC's Chief Operating Officer, outlined the goals of the redevelopment plans in a speech at last Monday's event. According to Marszalek, the riverfront will be more than simply a walkway.

"It will create pride, confidence and self-esteem," he said, "It will create a sense of place. It will create opportunities." Linking pavilions, gardens, bicycle paths, and attractions from local businesses, the RiverWay would provide a link between different parts of the city.

The DRFC has worked in close coordination for the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation in order to make the project a reality. Mike Dempsey, a project manager for the DEGC and U-M graduate, joined Marszalek to outline his organization's role in redeveloping the waterfront area.

The DEGC is not, Dempsey said, strictly a governmental organization. Instead, it acts as a middle-man between the government and private developers to help make the RiverWay a reality. The DEGC's main function is helping to attract investors to Detroit, which is a very difficult thing to do in light of its crime rate and lackluster economy.

But according to Dempsey, this obstacle has been overcome. Several real estate developers have made enormous financial investments in the area. Dempsey noted that businesses like Staples and Days Inn have also increased investment near the waterfront.

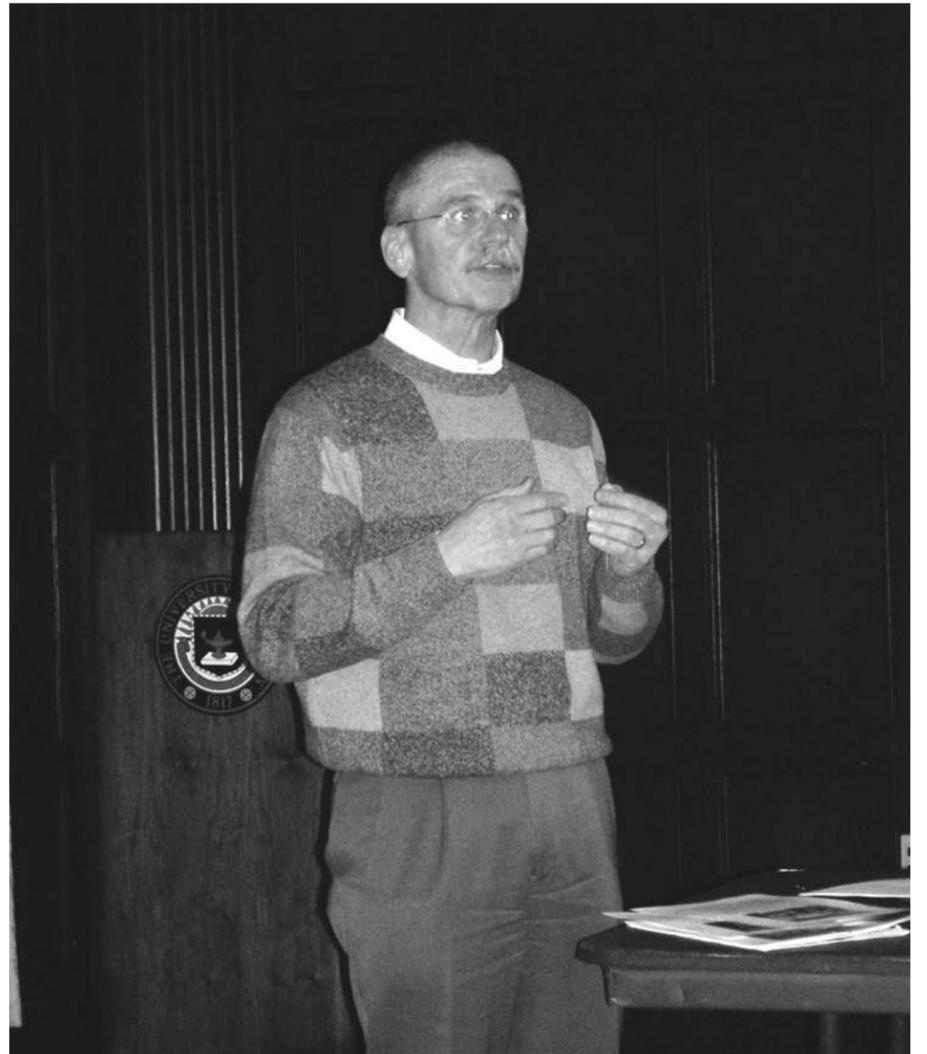
The revitalization of the waterfront area has not been all fun and games. Some land acquisition necessitated the use of eminent domain, a controversial tactic involving the

government seizure of private land for the "public good." Determining who actually owned much of the land in the construction area presented many problems.

"In many cases, we had to figure out who owned lots of land as big as this desk in front of me," Dempsey noted, as he motioned towards a small rectangular desk.

The riverfront revitalization effort has taken serious steps since its conception. Using enormous grants, the east RiverWay is nearing completion—and the redevelopment plans do not stop there. The DRFC has similar plans for the west side of the river, from Joe Louis Arena all the way to the Ambassador Bridge.

Said Marszalek, "There are many challenges, but the biggest challenge we face is to demonstrate that this RiverWay belongs to the people of Detroit and the region—something the people of Detroit have never had open access to." The work of the DRFC and DEGC are making this challenge a reality. **MR**



Jonny Slemrod/ The Michigan Review

Leonard Marszalek, Chief Operating Officer of the non-profit Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, discusses the progress of the Riverwalk project.

University Programs, Organizations Enable Students to Take Active Role in Detroit

By JENNI CHELENYAK, '10

THROUGH VARIOUS CLASSES and service groups, the University of Michigan has shown a strong interest in the city of Detroit. The new educational opportunities seem to benefit both Detroiters and U-M students alike.

The Detroit Project (DP) has been very concerned with fostering a relationship between U-M and Detroit. This service-learning group focuses its efforts on Brightmoor, a district in Northwest Detroit and another community in Southwest Detroit.

According to Cristina Johnson, Executive Director of the Detroit Project, U-M students are welcome in the City of Detroit. Johnson comments, "In all the situations I have encountered community members and Detroit residents really do work together. There is never that feeling 'we are providing a service to you, and you should be grateful.'"

The Detroit Project has established thirteen programs that run seven days a week. The DP has established a journalism club at Murphy Middle School, and plans to paint lockers at Harding Elementary. Notably, members participate in tutoring at Cesar Chavez Middle School and Neinas Elementary. Different from most tutoring programs, the Detroit Project utilizes the language skills of U-M students to provide bilingual tutors—a much needed service in the heavily Hispanic Southwest Detroit.

"We do not focus on the physical change we make in Brightmoor and Southwest Detroit through our programs, [but] on the growth and learning process both U-M students, and community members receive by working together," stated Johnson. Members are educated on issues that may be

important to their service, such as the history of Detroit and ways to promote change. Post-service, they also can mull over their time spent in Detroit. Johnson believes that "reflection facilitates self-discovery, encourages thoughtful questions, and challenges patterns of thinking."

The Department of Sociology at U-M, through various sections of Sociology 389: Practicum in Sociology, provides U-M

"If you're going to have sustained change, the academic institutions also have to be here as anchors in the community."

-Rod Gillum, Vice President of Corporate Responsibility and Diversity at GM

students a chance to work in Detroit. U-M students willing to step outside the bounds of Ann Arbor may also be able to receive college credit through several different sections of Sociology 389. Of the 35 sections of the course, four begin their names with "Detroit."

Section 109 pairs University of Michigan students with members of the Guidance

Center After-School Program. Through tutoring youth, as well as participating in other activities, University students help children develop "healthy decision making and violence prevention" skills.

Section 105 works with Detroit's Vetal K-8 school. Students are expected to help create a leadership program for the children. According to the course description, "U-M students' responsibilities and roles include helping plan activities, helping lead the discussions/debriefing, and most importantly, being a role model (especially as a successful college student) for the children."

Indicating that the University plans to stay involved with the City of Detroit, they have established the Detroit Center near Woodward Avenue. The location of the center may convince some that the University has maintained a neutral attitude—committed to helping Detroit as a whole rather than serving the East or West side. Hopefully, this center will not only encourage students to help Detroit but will also help to bring together different students at the University of Michigan who may not have worked together otherwise.

As Rod Gillum, Vice President of Corporate Responsibility and Diversity at General Motors said in a podcast on the University of Michigan website, "If you're going to have sustained change...the academic institutions also have to be here as anchors in the community...So to have the involvement of the University of Michigan speaks volumes about what they view to be their role in making certain that this region is one that we are all proud of." **MR**

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Co-Ed Dorm Rooms Pop Up at East Coast Universities

Schools report co-ed housing units cater to transgender students

By KATE O'CONNOR, '10

OVER THE LAST five years, some American universities have gradually begun to allow co-ed dorm rooms. While many university dorms are already co-ed by floor or by room, only about 20 offer the option of opposite gender roommates. The majority of these are small, East Coast, liberal arts schools such as Brown University, Bennington College, and Wesleyan College.

Gender blind/neutral housing is said to better accommodate gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students who would either be more comfortable with an opposite sex roommate or who are concerned that they would not be accepted by a same sex roommate.

The most recent school to offer gender neutral housing on its campus is Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. The proposal was submitted by two undergraduate students in the spring of 2006 and was officially accepted by the university the following December. The new policy allows different sex roommates to choose to live together in double rooms, but they are never randomly assigned. Like other roommate requests, both students must agree to the arrangement. However, this option is not available to freshman.

While the University of Michigan does not currently allow students to elect for opposite gender roommates, the school does have its own policy on gender neutral housing, which is available on the undergraduate housing website. According to the university housing policy

Any student can apply for gender-neutral housing, but accommodations are limited and, unlike Clark University, U-M students cannot apply to live in all residence halls with opposite gender friends.

on gender neutral housing, "housing assignments are made on a case by case basis that recognizes the variability of individual needs and preferences and the fact that appropriate accommodations may be limited in number."

Any student can apply for gender-neutral housing, but accommodations are limited and, unlike Clark University, U-M students cannot apply to live in all residence halls with opposite gender friends.

According to Alan Levy, Director of Communications for University Housing, the idea of allowing opposite gender roommates has never been seriously discussed at U-M. He said that the purpose of the current gender neutral housing policy is to make sure that transgender students know how to apply for housing and to make sure that they feel comfortable in a "welcoming, accommodating environment." Levy said that thus far there has been little to no student interest in allowing co-ed rooms and that student interest would be the first step in changing the housing policy. He also said that changing the policy would be difficult due to the "older traditional housing facilities" on campus.

Jacqueline Simpson, Director of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Affairs Office, said that a few students have expressed interest in a housing policy that would allow opposite sex roommates in residence halls. "In off campus housing, students often live in co-ed environments already. Even in the co-ops, there are members of the opposite sex living in the same room," Simpson said. She agreed that a change in the housing policy would need to be initiated by students.

At schools like Clark University, where this policy has been adopted, there have been some concerns expressed by parents and students. Under this policy, opposite sex couples could choose to room together, although housing officials at these schools believe that this is rarely the motivation for choosing opposite sex roommates.

While U-M does have some gender neutral housing accommodations already, it does not appear that the option of co-ed roommates will be available any time soon. **MR**

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Co-Ed dorm rooms are a far cry from the all-female Martha Cook Dorm

Universities Struggle to Combat Grade Inflation

By BLAKE EMERSON, '09

AROUND THIS TIME of year, admissions officers around the country are operating at peak capacity, delving through a record amount of applications. In recent years, not only have record numbers of applications created headaches, but also the task of distinguishing stellar applications from one another, as the phenomenon known as "grade inflation" comes to the forefront. Has America's video game generation really become smarter, or is high school becoming easier?

According to a recent government survey, the average high school GPA increased from 2.68 to 2.94 between 1990 and 2000. Therefore, the GPA range of applications has subsequently tightened at the high end of the scale. This becomes a problem when schools declare upwards of twenty valedictorians, since a selective university such as Michigan may either not have the capacity to accommodate them, or students with 3.9 GPAs may be crowded out.

The statistics of incoming Michigan students are astounding. In 2006, 28% of incoming freshmen had an unweighted grade-point average of 4.0. Chris Lucier, Director of Recruitment and Operations at the Department of Admissions, admits that there most likely is grade inflation, as grades increase "because of increased parental pressure." As schools such as Michigan get more competitive, parents feel pressure to act as cheerleaders for their students, pushing up mean grades in classrooms. Competitive high schools also need their students admitted and enrolled in selective universities to attract other students looking for

According to a recent government survey, the average high school GPA increased

from **2.68** in 1990
to **2.94** in 2000



that leg up in the college enrollment process.

With the help of many established methods, Lucier is hesitant to admit that grade inflation is affecting the admissions process at Michigan. "We take into consideration any indication that a certain school is skewing high," Lucier states, and also explains that counselors are assigned to geographic regions to familiarize themselves with high schools. Furthermore, all schools are required to fill out general statistics about their students' GPAs, allowing the admissions department to spot inflationary signs in problem schools. Perhaps most interesting is Michigan's use of statistics from the freshman students. Counselors pair freshmen with their respective high schools and look for correlations that would suggest schools that artificially inflate the worth of their students.

According to a recent CNN.com article about grade inflation, many are worried that test scores, which have been under scrutiny lately, are going to become more important in the admissions process. However, Lucier maintains that "grades and rigor of curriculum will remain the number one thing we're going to focus on during the 15-20 minutes we have to review each application," with the ultimate goal of spotting students who display "consistency, character, and commitment."

Sharing class rank data with other schools and creating a standard weight for AP scores would make GPAs more representative. This combination would save admission departments time and statistically elevate motivated students who take the toughest curricula. Yet, motivated students should not change their focus, according to Lucier, who advises students to "challenge [themselves] by taking tough courses and doing well in them." **MR**

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Christina Zajicek/ The Michigan Review

All too many handicapped students know the pain of getting shoved down from behind by Michigan students. Now, we all know the pain.

Teaching Dialogue and Diversity

Intergroup Dialogue classes teach diversity beyond race

BY ANNA MALECKE, '10

THE ADVERTISEMENTS ON the cafeteria tables attract attention by offering students a chance to discuss their favorite controversial topics in a small group setting...and earn two credits in the meantime. The Program on Intergroup Relations (IGR) distributed brightly colored 3-D fliers to campus cafeterias during class registration to recruit students for Sociology/Psychology 122, the program's sponsored course.

"We hope to enroll students of widely diverse interests, experiences, and opinions," said Charles Behling and Monita Thompson, the co-directors of the IGR.

Nicholas Sorensen, a doctoral student in social psychology, facilitated the dialogues and worked as a graduate student for the program.

"I believe the presence of diversity in an Intergroup Dialogue is a necessary condition for the success of the course," he said. "Advertising Intergroup Dialogues on cafeteria tables and elsewhere around campus allows the program to reach a broader population of students and consequently a more diverse student body."

The Intergroup Dialogues are structured differently than traditional university courses. Students are placed in a group focusing on a certain topic; topics range from gender to socioeconomic status. Groups usually consist of 14 students, divided equally with students representing each side of the social topic.

"For example, if the dialogue were on gender, there would be seven men and seven women," said Behling and Thompson.

Two trained students, one from each social category, facilitate the group, and a faculty member from either the sociology or psychology department designs the weekly meetings and grades the coursework. Students searching for a quick and easy two credits will be disappointed to learn that taking the Intergroup Dialogues course in-

volves writing weekly papers as well as a final paper.

Rather than encouraging discussion or debate, this course trains students to utilize a different method of communication: dialogue. Students' first task is to study the techniques of dialogue before they even put them into use.

"Most people don't know how to dialogue. It's a very different kind of communication than we experience on a daily basis," said Aaron Traxler-Ballew, who has experience facilitating the Intergroup Dialogues.

The focus on dialogue makes Psych/Soc 122 stand out significantly from other conventional ideas of education.

Traxler-Ballew claims that "Intergroup Dialogues provide experience as well as information, and this creates more interesting, useful, and effective learning."

Traditionally, universities have left it up to students to figure out their own method for reacting to diverse opinions and backgrounds. Now, it seems, a class exists to train students how to deal with diversity.

"Guided interaction... allows students to develop the communications skills which are essential in a society that is becoming increasingly diverse," said Sorensen.

Is such a class necessary in today's world? Is diversity so prominent in today's society that universities have an obligation to coach their students to react to it positively? The IGR thinks so.

Studies conducted in the 1980s led to the conclusion that a method of handling conflict could be taught to reduce destructive behavior. The Intergroup Dialogues were designed to teach this method and also test the results of it.

Said Sorensen, "Intergroup Dialogue experience has also contributed immensely to the quality of my relationships with friends and family by providing me effective tools for confronting and resolving interpersonal conflict and understanding and respecting differences between my perspective and the perspective of others." **MR**

Mock Discrimination Seeks to Teach Students About the Real Thing

"Boxes and Walls" exhibit teaches students the pain of discrimination

BY CHRISTINA ZAJICEK, '10

PUSHING KOLBY JOHNSON, U-M junior, off his crutches in a room marked "Disabled Persons" at the Trotter Multicultural Center may not seem educational. Yet the organizer of Boxes and Walls hope the image will educate students about daily acts of discrimination.

The Trotter Multicultural Center held its annual Boxes and Walls event in order to promote cultural and minority awareness. The Center accomplished this through creating an "interactive museum" in which visitors could gain perspective into the minds of the discriminated.

The International Room provided quite the introduction. Participants were asked to wear a bandana and list their favorite foods and customs. Upon

entering the room, the "natives" forced the visitors to assimilate into their culture by ripping up the sheets of paper that described holidays such as Christmas and favorite foods such as pizza. "We don't eat that shit in our country!" were among the many exclamations heard as the visitors quickly tried to fashion their bandanas to the "native's" style in order to avoid being yelled at.

The shouting quieted and the group was split into men and women, and they sat in what was meant to be a workplace. Upon completing the same tasks, the men would be paid in king-size candy bars, whereas the women were given Tootsie Rolls. The tour guide explained that in Michigan, the 49th lowest-paying state for women, for every one dollar a man earns, a woman earns the equivalent of sixty-seven cents.

Next was the Testing Room. Upon entering, visitors were asked if they loved their mother or father more, and then were seated. In front of each individual was a standardized test in which the person could only fill out one bubble to describe their race, and

as the tour guide described, being forced to identify with only one race, if one is biracial, is like "asking whether you love your mom or dad more."

One of the more interesting rooms was a replication of a South Quad lobby covered with trash. The participants were asked to be janitors and to quickly clean up the mess before students came. As vacuums whirred and papers flew into trash bags, "students" walked through the mess and exclaimed, "I pay twenty thousand a year to go here and you'd think the janitors could at least do their job." The South Quad room was meant to demonstrate the casual disrespect directed at University workers.

Perhaps the most controversial room would be the one where, upon entering, it was assumed that homosexuals constituted the majority of the population. The room was set up as a Psychology 111 lecture and three visitors were randomly selected to

represent a panel of the "progressive" heterosexual experts, an ironic twist on the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Bureau Panel.

Among the questions asked

Participants were asked, "If you slept with someone of the same sex, how do you know you wouldn't like it?"

were, "If you slept with someone of the same sex, how do you know you wouldn't like it?" These provocative questions intended to mirror the questions that homosexuals receive, and promote the idea of respect when asking these kinds of questions.

"We're breaking it down at this level so that it can help future generations," is how junior Tanya Nikam explains the intention of the interactive museum. Sophomore Railee Johnson felt that the purpose of the museum was not only to spread awareness, but to make people more willing to speak up when they see someone is being unfairly discriminated against. Still, she feels "sad" that there's "only so much I can do as a person."

Mixed emotions were felt after undergoing the Trotter exhibit, but Nikam articulated the one thing that most participants could agree feeling. "It's true that there's only so much one person can do, but maybe, even if one person does something, it will trickle down and ultimately help hundreds of others." **MR**



Christina Zajicek/ The Michigan Review

Students pick up trash to simulate the experience of janitors, who are now apparently a minority group. Also, future job training for U-M graduates.

news

the michigan review

9/11 Conspiracy Theorists Visit Campus Amidst Protest

By JONNY SLEMROD, '10

ACCORDING TO KEVIN Ryan, Robert Bowman, and Kevin Barrett, everything we know about the events of September 11th is wrong.

The three men came to the Michigan Union ballroom last Sunday to present their hypotheses on how, and, more importantly, why the government performed a controlled demolition to topple the World Trade Center Towers on September 11, 2001. The presentation, titled "9/11 and Our Civil Rights", was sponsored by Ann Arbor 9/11 Truth, an organization dedicated to exposing the "truth" surrounding the terrorist attacks.

The first speaker was Kevin Ryan, a former Site Manager for Environmental Health Laboratories, a division of Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), a well-known nonprofit laboratory which develops safety testing procedures for many consumer and industrial projects. Ryan claims that he was fired from his position at UL after writing a letter to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) which publicly questioned a 2004 government report detailing the collapse of the World Trade Center.

Although Ryan admitted "I don't nearly have the credentials," of Bowman and Barrett, he gave an hour-long speech in which he attempted to discount several government reports' on the towers' collapses. Throughout Ryan's speech, he contrasted official government reports from the NIST with reports from UL, claiming that the government reports were part of an enormous cover-up of the events.

The Bush Administration was "undermining" science, according to Ryan, a process he dubbed "Bush Science." Bush Science came in many forms, such as the claim that jet fuel fire actually burns at 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, not 2,900 as cited in NIST reports. Ryan also faulted the government for using only a small group of engineers to conduct 9/11 research, when there are 1.5 million registered engineers in the American Society of Civil Engineers. Bush and other elites in his administration benefited from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Ryan said, by reaping profits from defense and civilian contracts and oil acquisition from the War in Iraq.



Jonny Slemrod/ The Michigan Review

Young Americans for Freedom mock the members of a panel discussion on 9/11 conspiracy theories. The protestors held signs that read "Bush Eats Babies" and "Bush Causes Cancer."

Dr. Robert Bowman, President of the Institute for Space and Security Studies, was the next speaker at the event. Bowman was the Director of Advanced Space Programs under President Carter, and according to Ann Arbor 9/11 Truth is "one of the country's foremost authorities of national security." A self-described "progressive populist," Bowman argued that the official version of the 9/11 events given to the American people was "impossible."

Bowman's speech also focused on the alleged motives of 9/11, repeating Ryan's claim that the Bush Administration profited heavily from oil and natural gas contracts received following the invasion of Iraq.

Bowman did not delve into scientific explanations supporting a controlled demolition, however, because he believed that the attacks on 9/11 may have been caused by what he called a "complicit" Federal government.

Last to speak was Kevin Barrett, an associate lecturer of Islamic and Arab Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A controversial figure, several state politicians unsuccessfully moved to have Barrett fired when his views on 9/11 were discovered. In his speech, Barrett claimed that the government used demolitions to collapse the towers in order to garner public support for military expansion. The seizure of evidence, including video tapes of the collision of the planes

hitting the buildings and scraps of metal from Ground Zero, points to a fabricated government conspiracy, Barrett claimed, to keep America "top dog."

Other controversial campus events, such as YAF's "Three-Ex Terrorists Speak Out," and former National Security Council member Raymond Tanter's speech concerning Iran in December both drew hundreds of protestors. These hecklers ruined the "free speech" atmosphere by purposely disrupting these events. Strangely, the same was not so last Sunday, as most in the audience seemed entirely complicit with the panel's heavily-criticized and frequently debunked theories of 9/11. **MR**

PROTEST FROM PAGE 3

passages that advocate, and in the past have led to, violence.

When asked why a walk out was chosen, Gutting replied that "we do not want things to escalate. Arabs and Muslim people are very vocal" and a walk out was the "best thing to do." The group hoped their demonstration would be seen as a peaceful demonstration. Furthermore, by vacating seats after the event started the coalition was "filtering the number of people who hear this message."

"[The speakers] absolutely do not make distinctions between various interpretations of Islam" Gutting explained, adding that the speakers often "compare Islam to Nazism" by calling it Islamofascism. The coalition pointed out that only a minority in the Muslim community take violent action.

However, last week, in an interview with the *Review*, the speakers spoke of a dichotomy within Islam. Zachariah Anani, one of the speakers at the event, specifically spoke of "two Korans," one of which was violent, the other peaceful.

Gutting also voiced suspicions regard-

ing the speakers' conversion to Christianity. He elaborated that their change in religious views is a tactic to give credibility to their shifted political beliefs.

When asked about YAF's sponsorship, Gutting cited the group's "penchant for publicity" as a strong factor. He referenced an event this past week where the group was covered for protesting a speech about 9/11. Holding up a copy of the *Michigan Daily*, he stated, "look again, front page of the *Daily* back-to-back." He wished he could believe that YAF's "intention was to open up dialogue" but asserted that their tactics were simply "not constructive."

As far as the monochrome fashion for the night, school pride drove the color. "Yellow stands out and most U-M students own a yellow shirt." The group hoped that by using the universal U-M maize that the demonstration would be more accessible to students.

The coalition hoped that their walk out would serve as an alternative message to the one sponsored by YAF. After the walk out, the coalition sponsored a panel discussion in the Modern Languages Building. **MR**

ASIANS FROM PAGE 1

limited to just Michigan. Throughout the country many of the top public and private institutions are criticized for holding Asian students to a higher standard. Elite colleges are accused of putting quotas on the number of Asians admitted, in order for the school to maintain a certain image.

Princeton University has been the main target of such criticism recently. Jian Li, a freshman at Yale University, has filed a lawsuit against Princeton, claiming he was rejected because of his Asian ethnicity. The lawsuit's exposure escalated recently because of a story published in *The Daily Princetonian*, which mocked Asian students and their complaints with current admission standards.

So why are many elite colleges, who are worried about their image, turning away Asian applicants despite the strength of their

applications?

Negative stereotyping of Asians may account for some of this, including traits such as a lack of academic creativity, an unwillingness to challenge the ideas of classmates and professors, and a lack of contribution to social, political or academic extracurricular activities.

Hollinger also added that criticism of Asian students and their reluctance to participate in extracurricular activities is unfounded and unfair

Professor David Hollinger, Chairman of the History Department at UC-Berkeley, says that these stereotypes are simply not true, and that Asian students are "just as engaged and active in discussion as others" and they "are real individuals."

Hollinger also added that criticism of Asian students and their reluctance

to participate in extracurricular activities is unfounded and unfair, that the extracurricular atmosphere at Berkeley "has not really changed in the last 10 years."

In the wake of the MCRI, Asian applicants may stand to benefit from new, racially-neutral guidelines, though only time will tell. **MR**

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Local coffee shops have been on the front lines of the fair-trade movement

The Fair Trade Tradeoff

BY BLAKE EMERSON, '09

TRADITIONAL ECONOMICS STATES that consumers will attempt to purchase the good they desire at the lowest possible price. But this hasn't always been the case when dealing with coffee.

In Ann Arbor, consumers often dig deeper into their wallets in hope of a better quality of life for poor coffee growers around the world. Even the University has joined in, providing "fair trade" coffee in its cafeterias. But these noble actions may be contributing to the long-run failure of the coffee industry.

In the free market coffee trade in countries like Colombia, middlemen buy arabica coffee beans from suppliers, and then distribute the crops to large buyers throughout the world. Until recently, the world market price for Arabica beans hovered around historic lows of \$.50/pound, well below what activist fair-trade organizations, such as TransFair USA, believed was a sustainable price for coffee growers.

TransFair USA establishes agreements with these farmers and remove the middlemen who allegedly depress wages. Exclusive relationships also guarantee a minimum price of \$1.26 per pound. According to their website, poor farmers earn "over \$60 million more than they would have earned selling their harvests to local intermediaries."

While still in its early stages, this luxury wage benefits only a few farmers in these regions, according to *The Economist*. Current restrictions exclude coffee plantations and large family farms from receiving fair trade recognitions. This, in turn systematically excludes the largest segments of coffee growers in third-world countries.

Regardless of the economic consequences, fair trade coffee has been a hot sell. In 2005 alone, the industry saw sales grow 37 percent worldwide, growing to a \$1.4 billion industry. Much of this growth has been sparked by movements from both Starbucks and Proctor and Gamble (Folgers, Nestle) towards fair trade coffee.

Tim Harford, author of *The Undercover Economist*, believes that fair trade buyers are contributing heavily to large corporations,

ironically the same companies that they often target. He believes that there is a substantial profit motive for companies like Starbucks, which take advantage of good-conscious consumers. He estimates that only 10% of fair trade profits trickle down to the coffee growers, implying that much of the gains stay within the companies or the middlemen.

Fair trade coffee has also sparked a larger debate within the economic community about the viability of free trade when dealing with third-world countries. Alex Nicholls, a professor at Oxford University, argues that free trade is only efficient when all producers obtain "perfect market information." Since poor farmers have little knowledge of market forces, they have no idea how to negotiate properly with middlemen.

Tim Harford, author of *The Undercover Economist*, estimates that only 10% of fair trade profits trickle down to the coffee growers, implying that much of the gains stay within the companies or go to middlemen

Traditional economists, such as Tim Harford, see the issue in a much different light. Since prices have been depressed, he argues, it implies that a

surplus of coffee is sifting through the economy. Providing a minimum price for coffee growers encourages current producers to work harder, and encourages new enterprising growers to enter the market. Eventually, as classic economic thought teaches, prices of coffee may stagnate.

Over the last two years, though, prices of arabica beans have substantially increased, confusing many traditional economists. Coffee now sells for well over \$1.00/pound on the open market exchange. Current reports blame a supply crunch in Brazil, along with increasing demand from the rapidly commercializing countries like China and India. This, in turn, has helped all farmers. The question is: how long will the prices remain at a level suitable for the protection of farmers?

So how does this issue affect many university students? After the Coca-Cola crisis last winter, all dorm cafeterias exclusively serve fair trade coffee. Students pay more to supply fair trade coffee. Michigan State made the switch to fair trade months before Michigan did. The intentions are noble for all fair trade supporters, but only time will tell who wins the battle of activists and economists. **MR**

Jack Bauer and 24 Make Triumphant Return to Airwaves

Exploring the political nature of FOX's hit show

BY MICHAEL O'BRIEN, '08

IT'S ABOUT THAT time of year again. On Mondays at 9pm, millions of Americans—many of them college students—crowd around their televisions for the Bauer Hour; that is, the latest episode of the smash FOX show, *24*.

But as Jack Bauer, the show's central character, continues to somehow defy death just like James Bond and MacGyver before him, it seems as though he's wrapped a particular demographic around his trigger finger: the American conservatives.

Even this may be somewhat of an understatement. Last June, just a month after the fifth season of *24* had finished airing, the conservative think-tank the Heritage Foundation hosted an event on the show, examining whether *24* is fact or fiction. Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff kicked off the event with a question-and-answer session. Rush Limbaugh moderated a panel discussion with actors from the show. (Limbaugh planted a kiss on Mary Lynn Rajsak, who plays Chloe, before beginning). And among the dignitaries in the sold-out crowd was Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Greg Corombos, the host of a nightly syndicated news show for the conservative Radio America network, is an avid fan of the show. "Jack has a very clear cut distinction between what's right and what's wrong. He always understands the big picture and is ruthless within the rules," Corombos said, adding, "and sometimes outside of the rules."

24 is largely germane to politics today, especially in regards to prosecuting the War

on Terror. The organization at the center of the show is CTU—Counter-Terrorist Unit. Jack routinely pushes the limits in pursuing his goals in ways that make lawyers for the ACLU squeamish. And speaking of the ACLU, there are numerous debates that simmer on the show about what the bounds are in pursuing an enemy of America.

But the show skewers both sides equally. Last year, a megalomaniacal president made sweeping assertions of unchecked power. He turned out to be the perpetrator of terrorist attacks on the homeland and of the assassination of his predecessor.

But it's no wonder that *24* is a darling to conservatives. Its main character and his values appeal in a very serious way to true-blue, or, rather, true-red, Americans. Jack Bauer, on more than one occasion, has shown a willingness to sacrifice himself for his country. Appeals to patriotism and service inspire Jack Bauer, and fall squarely in line with the sensibilities of conservatives.

Plus, the show's characters prosecute the War on Terror in entirely hawkish ways. Sensitivity towards the nation's enemies takes a backseat to securing victory. Additionally, the world of *24* isn't one of delicate nuance and cultural sensibility. Rather, it's one with stark, black-and-white decisions to be made, often determined by harsh utilitarian analysis.

24, for many American liberals, would be somewhat of a nightmare scenario if it were fact and not fantasy. An all-out war against America's foes, where detainees are routinely beaten or tortured, where the civil rights of American Muslims are jeopardized, and enemies are treated just as such, not as "different," is one that plays not-so-gently on the fault lines of the liberal versus conservative divide.

Fantasy or fact, by *24*'s art imitating life, we can learn a great deal about how we live today. **MR**



Jack's back!

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University Professor Examines American Exceptionalism in Sports

BY REBECCA CHRISTY, '08

LIKE ANY OTHER book on the topic of American exceptionalism, Andrei Markovits' latest book begins with a discussion on the main theories behind America's qualitative differences from other nations.

The lack of a defining socialist movement over the course of its history, and the abundance of land which allowed individuals to focus on personal achievement rather than identify with collective goals, were both significant in creating what we believe to be the 'American dream.'

Markovits, who is Professor of Comparative Politics and German Studies at U-M, applies these theories in *Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism* to explain why soccer, while the premier sport in the rest of the world, holds relatively little interest in American culture.

As Markovits explained in an interview, "Sports are like languages, and Americans

do not speak the language of soccer." He acknowledged the popularity of soccer among the youth of America, but concluded that soccer is not part of mainstream sports culture.

"What people read, discuss, analyze, compare, and historicize" are sports that are defined by Markovits as part of culture. These are the things that people discuss around the water cooler, things that they follow and not just participate in.

For Americans, this applies to what Markovits calls the "Big Three and one half:" American football, basketball, and baseball, with hockey as the half. Markovits' book considers whether Americans have the "sports space" to allocate as much dedication to soccer as it does other sports, and what American soccer needs to achieve to garner national support.

Markovits claims soccer was unsuccessful in America during the 19th century for three main reasons. Firstly, it became crowded out by the popularity of baseball which is played in the spring and summer months,

like soccer. Secondly, soccer was viewed as a non-American sport when nativism and nationalism were important for establishing a unique American identity outside of Europe. Thirdly, a lack of organization led to the demise of soccer's original implementation.

One of the most interesting topics in *Offside* is the discussion of the American Dream in the molding of America's sports culture. The celebration of the individual over the collective has been reflected in America's attitudes towards sports such as soccer, which focuses largely on a team mentality, and competes fiercely at the international level.

One need only look at the hesitancy of professional athletes to join the 2004 Men's Olympic basketball team to understand how unimportant international competition seems. Not until after an embarrassing 6th place finish did American professional basketball express a willingness to play for the US team. When asked about this unenthusiastic attitude towards representing Amer-

ica, Markovits explained that "an American athlete can have a rewarding and highly respected career without ever playing for the United States."

In a discussion about the future of soccer in America, David Beckham's new contract with the Los Angeles Galaxy was the focus.

"David Beckham is necessary, but not a sufficient condition for soccer in America," said Markovits. When asked whether or not Beckham's celebrity status outside of soccer reflected negatively on American soccer Markovits explained that Beckham will bring what the MLS needs: publicity. He makes the point that Jay Leno would not talk about the best soccer player in the world coming to the MLS if no one could recognize his name.

Sports may be seen as a frivolous subject in the world of academia, but Markovits makes a strong and fascinating argument about its role in what may be seen as heavier topics such as national identity, culture and ideology. **MR**

University Professor Scott Page Deals with Michigan's 'Difference'

Key contributor to the University's pre-Proposal 2 educational programs speaks to the Review about his newest book

BY CHRISTINE HWANG, '10

IN HIS NEW book, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies*, Professor Scott E. Page argues that "diversity trumps ability."

Before you roll your eyes, though, know that this isn't the overly-politicized "diversity" extolled by University administrators like Mary Sue Coleman. Forget politics, BAMN demonstrators, Proposal 2, and all those nitpicky cafeteria debates about fairness, discrimination, and individuality.

Think, rather, about how the many types of coffee you can buy at one of the numerous coffee shops in Ann Arbor improves your life. Think again, on a bigger scale; for instance, consider how the many types of schools within the University of Michigan can improve an education.

Page, writing in a casual tone and sneaking in tidbits about philosophy, celebrities, and the creation of Ben & Jerry's ice cream, takes a non-political stance on diversity. Page himself sees his book "not as much of a political statement as a mathematical proof." But don't worry if you barely made it past the quantitative reasoning requirement; Page's explanations make mathematical theory seem as easy as ordering a list of priorities.

Page defines diversity as "differences in how people see the world and how people think." He leaves how diversity is attained up to the reader, but we can see that it is diversity in the broadest sense. Page wants to tell readers that "just as we think ability is important, we should think that diversity is important." He writes of the phenomenon that when you present a problem to a group of diverse individuals, their solution is almost always correct.

When asked about how the University of Michigan should apply his ideas of diversity, Page answers appropriately in the true

spirit of the book, "I think that that is very much open to interpretation. I think that different people will see different things and, in fact, if they didn't, the book wouldn't be true." He grants, "There could be an argument to say that we need more minorities on campus...On the other hand, there could be an argument that we need more conservatives on campus."

Beyond politics, Page highlights the importance of the University's emphasis on interdisciplinary scholarship: "...I think that almost any reading of the book comes down on the side in favor of interdisciplinary research." He also states, "By combining good departments, an average institution becomes a stellar university. It is left to readers and students at the University on the best ways an interdisciplinary learning community can be achieved."

When speaking of the book's reception, Page said, "I think that many people read the book and say that it provides overwhelming evidence, it provides against theoretical evidence, as to why one would want diversity in the classroom, the laboratory...at the University of Michigan. Other people are going to read the book...and say what the book really says is that you want people who are talkative and talkative means that the question of whether two people think differently based on their gender, race, or identity is an empirical question."

After all, U-M would not be U-M without its opposing viewpoints, its bitter conservatives, whiny liberals, in-betweens, and totally out-there. As Page says, "The nice thing is that you can get people who wouldn't speak, yelling at each other...intellectual discussion."

The Difference assumes this inevitable diversity, encourages it, and realizes that even if everyone cannot agree, at least we can get people to think about big issues. **MR**

Illinois Professor Outlines The 'Trouble With Diversity' in New Book

BY MARIE COUR, '08

AFTER THE SUCCESS of the MCRI last November, the University issued a series of statements declaring its support of diversity on this campus and formed groups to ensure that the campus would be welcoming to the various ethnic and racial communities that remained.

In his new book, *The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learned to Love Identity and Ignored Inequality*, Walter Benn Michaels, the head of the English Department at the University of Illinois-Chicago, argues that affirmative action exacerbates existing social problems and fails to correct those it was designed to remedy.

Michaels argues affirmative action combined with multiculturalism creates a society where nothing can ever be denounced. Contemporary society, which insists on respecting the "Other," extends to economic differences as well as racial and social issues. Multiculturalists believe all cultures are intrinsically valuable, meaning that the lifestyles of those living in poverty simply reflect a cultural—rather than real—difference. This means that the poor in America simply live differently from the rich; their material needs simply reflect their different culture, rather than a social issue that needs to be addressed.

Possibly the most interesting point that Michaels makes about affirmative action is that it undermines any attempts to address the lack of meritocracy in the country. Affirmative action admits minority students to places they might not otherwise be able to attend, while multiculturalism gives them a visible place on their campus. By admitting minority students, however, Michaels believes that it dilutes their ability to criticize the rest of society.

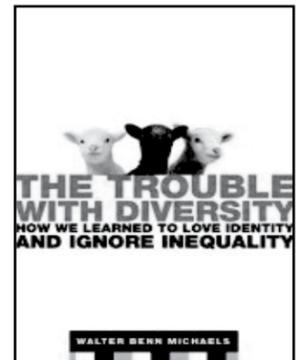
Likewise, the presence of minority students at prestigious colleges allows wealthy students to ignore larger social problems. The people who attend these schools will be hesitant to discuss the ways in which the current educational system is fraught with

economic disparity. The children of wealthy parents are given a racially and ethnically diverse college system, skewing their understanding of American society.

For all of the strengths and insightful comments of this book, Michaels descends into territory familiar to college professors, writing as a Marxist who abhors private property. The only solution to the economic disparities Michaels sees is through a series of redistributive programs administered by the government. He views private schools as perpetrators of inequality, and that blacks are owed reparations because of some notion of communal guilt.

Michael's book should resonate with everyone at Michigan because he shows that the arguments of the Civil Rights Era of equality fall on deaf ears. The racial discrimination of Jim Crow is no longer legally and socially acceptable, making diversity speeches like President Mary Sue Coleman's as courageous as a speech praising police officers or firemen.

The gospel of diversity and accep-



tance has permeated all section of society. Michaels comments that when Republicans such as Gale Norton, former Secretary of the Interior, come out in favor of inclusion, "anti-discrimination isn't just for liberals anymore." This view has moved from the fringe of American politics to the center. Michaels understands that the problem of inequality in 2007 is vastly different than it was in 1965, and recommends that policies should change to reflect this. **MR**

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Race, Gender, Religion and the Race for 2008



With the 2008 Election on the horizon, Political Science Professor Vincent Hutchings talks about the future for “minority” candidates

BY DANIELLE PUTNAM, '08

WITH THE RACE for the White House heating up, some of the leading candidates are bringing unprecedented elements to the table.

The Democratic frontrunners for the 2008 elections are a woman, Hillary Clinton, and an African American, Barack Obama. For the Republicans, Mitt Romney, a Mormon, could very well gain the nomination. Although Americans may not

“There are two issues at hand here: One, how will they do? And two, how will their minority status affect them?”

**-Political Science Professor
Vincent Hutchings**

be prepared for a person of minority status to lead the country, these candidates have all fared well in pre-election polls. In fact, their status as minority citizens may work to their advantage.

According to University political science professor Vincent Hutchings, it is difficult to determine which of the two minority candidates will take the nomination for the Democratic Party.

“There are two issues at hand here. One, how will they do? And two, how will their minority status affect them? Everyone agrees, based on the polling data, Clinton is the frontrunner [for the Democratic Party]. And generally, voters don’t have a negative reaction to female candidates,” Hutchings said.



Professor Hutchings is an expert on election studies

Hutchings seems to believe that women are seen as more capable at resolving certain issues because they are more emotional.

However, this strength may also hurt women since most Americans prefer a strong backbone when it comes to national security, defense, and foreign relations.

Hutchings reasons that, because the main issue facing the presidency right now is the war in Iraq, and since the war is not widely favored, it could very well have little or no effect on

Clinton’s candidacy.

Hutchings also said, “We have to be careful. It doesn’t mean that all women will do well just because Clinton is.”

Hutchings believes Americans will be receptive to an African American candidate. He reminds voters to keep in mind that Jesse Jackson came in third in 1984 and came in second in 1988 when vying for the Democratic nomination.

His success largely depends on his ability to raise funds and garner as much popular support as Clinton. If he is able to muster support from outside the African American community, his chances will increase greatly. This is because minority candidates often give the impression during the campaign that they are simply running to further the interests of their communities. Hutchings said if Obama is able to show that he is interested in advancing the general welfare, he could catch up to Clinton before the primaries.

As for Mitt Romney, his biggest obstacle does not deal with gathering support or raising funds; rather, it focuses on his competitors.

“Romney has name recognition issues,” explained Hutch-

Although Americans may not be prepared for a person of minority status to lead the country, these candidates have all fared well in pre-election polls.

ings. In order to become one of the front runners for the Republican Party nomination, he must establish himself. He is running against some very well known Republicans such as Rudy Giuliani and John McCain.

Moreover, if Romney is able to keep the oft-controversial Mormonism under the table, he could have a good shot at the Republican nomination.

In terms of voting patterns, Clinton may have clearest path to the presidency, considering the large number of female representatives, senators, and governors, not to mention the ascension of Nancy Pelosi as the first female speaker of the House.

But for now, it is still too soon to determine whether or not the history of the United States will remain viable come November 2008. In addition to attempting to decipher the outcome, it is unclear how voters will react to the wide range of minorities represented by the candidates.

For now, Americans should pay close attention to policy and motives of the candidates, especially to help decide whether or not the candidates are simply interested in furthering their own “communities” initiatives. **MR**

Constitutional Conservative Takes Shot at Presidency

BY ADAM PAUL, '08

TEXAS CONGRESSMAN Ron Paul (R) filed papers in January to form a Presidential Exploratory Committee.

Paul, long known as a staunchly principled congressman, will now collect campaign funding and gauge his support for a 2008 run.

“There was no true conservative in the field of announced candidates,” explained Ken Schneider, Chairman of Paul’s Exploratory Committee.

Paul’s politics differ from those of any candidate of either party. His Congressional website proclaims that he, “never votes for legislation unless the proposed measure is expressly authorized by the Constitution.” This ideological stance has caused him to reject so many bills that he has earned the title “Dr. No” in the House.

Paul has attempted a presidential run before. Back in 1988, Paul ran for the office on the Libertarian Party ticket. “2008 is a different time than 1988. The previous campaign will not be much of a benefit or a distraction,” Schneider explained.

Since '88, Paul has left the Libertarian Party and has joined the Republican Party. He is currently in his ninth term representing Texas’ 14th district, in the US Congress. Despite the change of party, Paul’s politics remain very much the same.

Paul has stood out for his willingness to depart from his party on key legislation. He was one of only three Republicans to vote against the No Child Left Behind act, and has been an outspoken critic of the Iraq War, continuing to compare the effort to Vietnam.

“The turmoil in Iraq is worse than ever and most Americans are willing to tolerate the cost, both human and economical” Paul has stated on the House floor.

“Voters finally have a candidate consistently for shrinking the power of government,” staid Macomb County Commission Leon Drolet (R), who is heading Paul’s exploratory committee in Michigan.

Drolet hopes that those Republican primary voters who are “sick of candidates who switch views” will be attracted to Paul’s clear policy stances.

While Paul represents an opportunity for voters, his entrance may challenge the others vying for the Republican nomination. Paul is proud of every vote he has ever made and it will be difficult to make him admit mistakes.

“Other candidates have to patch together a network of excuses and fibs. Paul won’t have to do that,” said Drolet, adding that candidates will do their best to ignore Paul in the upcoming primary.

Looking the other way may fail if Paul’s committed national base comes out strong. Schneider observed that despite Paul’s lack of advertising for the Exploratory Committee that the response has been overwhelming;

“Just from the story announcing the committee, we have been overloaded with phone calls and e-mails,” he said.

Furthermore, Drolet pointed, “Paul does not have to buy his supporters, he can focus money on advertising and buy recognition instead of staffers and votes.”

Drolet compared Paul’s current situation to his original bid for his current Texas Congressional seat. He recounted that Paul’s primary opponent had well-known supporters but that Paul won because “people were not fooled by big name party leaders.” Schneider echoed this statement, reporting that “Paul is not an establishment favorite, look; this campaign is a long shot. We know that but we think it’s worth it.”

Yet Paul continues to receive popularity with some voters nationwide. Paul has built his support base mainly because of his predictable strict Constitutionalist positions and as Drolet notes, “that is not easy to find.” **MR**



Congressman Ron Paul (R-TX)