

1-13-2004

## Independent- Jan. 13, 2004

Andrea Zelinski

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The Northeastern Illinois University

# INDEPENDENT

Tuesday,  
January  
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Volume  
20  
Issue 9

Chicago

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Illinois

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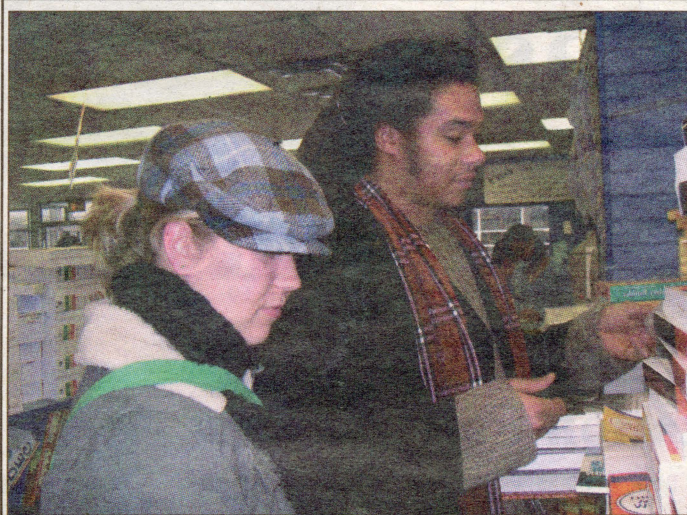
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Students  
crowd Beck's  
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Thursday,  
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in search of  
books and  
supplies in  
preparation  
for the Spring  
Semester.

Classes Commenced

January  
12, 2004



Counterclockwise from bottom: Jaquanda Villegas rummages through notebooks; Heather Kim squats down to find the best price; Liliana Luna studies Beck's backpacks; Sam Kordys anxiously waits to pay for his books; and Ally Loftus and Andrew Taggart in the need to purchase a new dictionary.



photos by Cecilia Carboni

## Collaboration of Church and State

University endorses Christian Christmas service, Congressman  
Rush, evangelization and conflicting message on federal law

by Tom Robb  
Staff Writer

On the afternoon of December 2nd, 2003 The *Independent* learned that U.S. Congressman Bobby Rush was on campus. *Independent* reporters went to the Science building to cover the story and were surprised when, upon entering, were told there was a church service in progress in the science building lecture hall. *Independent* reporters were then given an Order of Service

and a Christian songbook.

In this service a video played, followed shortly by scripture, song, and a sermon by Congressman Rush. The video said "Evangelizing" on the screen and was giving instruction as to how to approach children when spreading the "Word of God."

The advertising for this event said: "Project Angle Tree invites you to attend," "Christmas Worship Service," "A Christmas Message given by Bobby Rush," "Come

Worship with us as we sing, testify to the gift of God--Jesus Christ our Lord." The ad then showed the NEIU logo and stated, "Sponsored by the Special Programs Committee of the Dean of Students Office."

The *Independent* was also informed by a source with in the SGA that Congressman Rush was paid an honorarium for his appearance at the service of several hundred dollars from the NEIU Program Board. The event was lightly attended but raised Constitutional questions.

Angle Tree is a program that, on its surface, has admirable aims. Angle Tree gives gifts and holds camps for children who have a parent who is incarcerated. A deeper examination of Angle Tree reveals what could easily be perceived as a different collateral aim.

Angle Tree's main program could be seen by all at the bookstore on campus. Students and faculty could purchase an ornament that would be placed on a small tree in the bookstore. The monies from that

## Bush's immigration proposal close to home

Immigrant students may benefit from law

by Cecilia Carboni  
Production Editor

NEIU has a large population of immigrants. Although many have attained their citizenship, they still know the hardships associated with it. Bush's immigration proposal can effect the family and friends of many of our students.

An estimated eight million illegal immigrants currently reside in the United States, and President Bush intends to show them some "compassion" with his recent immigration proposals. Bush's plans call for legal working status to be granted to those who are currently employed. Mixed reactions have been expressed by both sides on the immigration issue.

Great effort has been taken to make clear that this is not an amnesty. What Bush is outlining is a temporary labor program. Those who can prove that they are employed, and pay the registration fee, will receive a three-year work permit. The permit can be renewed once, for a maximum of six years. Administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, this program is being touted as a step towards employment rights for non-citizens.

The economy is one concern deeply integrated into the proposal. Businesses are interested in low-wage work, and illegal immigrants fill the niche that most Americans do not accept. Employers must prove that the job could not be filled by an American before a permit is granted to a non-citizen. U.S. Rep. Jim Kolbe from Arizona has suggested that employers must post the jobs on the Internet for a period of 14 days so that American citizens can have priority access to it.

Many conservatives have attacked Bush by saying that he is



Morris Brown, U.S. Congressman Bobby Rush, and Professor Doc. Speller after Christmas worship service December 2nd.

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Northeastern Illinois

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# Around Campus

## Bug House Returns

Bug House is an on-line community offering students, faculty, and staff old-fashioned dialogue through the internet. To find out what all this is about surf to [www.bughouse.neiu.edu](http://www.bughouse.neiu.edu).

## Did you like the Matrix?

Come see a video of Eckhart Tolle, author of *The Power of Now*. Tolle speaks about issues raised in *The Matrix* such as "Who are we really?" and "Is human freedom possible?" This will be held in room SU 219 on Thursday, January 15, from 1:40 - 3:00 pm.

## Reggae Bash

Black Caucus Club sponsors a bash filled with music by DJ Ken. The event will be on Friday, January 23 from 9:00 pm - 1:00 am in Alumni Hall. Admission is \$5.00, free for NEIU students. MUST be 17 and older.

## Black Heritage Club Talent Show

The show will be on February 20. Auditions will be held during club meetings every Tuesday 1:40 - 2:50 pm in FA 203.

## Student Organization Fair

Wednesday and Thursday, January 21 & 22 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm in the Village Square.

## Stage Center Auditions

Auditions for the Spring schedule will be held in the Stage Center next to FA 109 on January 20 and 21. From 1:40 - 3:00 pm and 7:00 - 9:00 pm. No appointment necessary.

## Hot tip?



Know something we don't? Tip us off about news affecting the NEIU community by calling (773) 442-4577 or

E-mail us at

[neiu\\_independent@yahoo.com](mailto:neiu_independent@yahoo.com)

## Angel Tree, from front page

sale would then go directly to the Angle Tree Program. There is a brief explanation about Angle Tree in the bookstore, but it does not fully disclose the group's practices when it comes to how it will use those monies for proselytizing.

What students did not see is that on Angle Tree's web site <http://www.angletree.org>, under the Evangelism section, there is a "Guide for Giving the Greatest Gift of All," an instructional guide "For Angle Tree Evangelism."

In the guide's opening paragraph it states, "Angle Tree is not just about delivering Christmas Gifts to the children of prisoners. It's really all about you and your church sharing the gospel with these very special children." It continues, "Church volunteers sharing the gift of salvation—that's what makes Angle Tree totally different from other Christmas gift programs."

In the Evangelism Guidelines it states, "Your task is to use the occasion of giving a gift to 'sow the seed.'"

The Independent contacted Dean of Students Michael Kelly, who chairs the Student Affairs Special Programs Committee (a group who coordinates spiritual-oriented events for NEIU through the Student Affairs Office) that sponsored the Angle Tree Program at NEIU.

## Sodexho denies Mad Cow in cafeteria

by Tom Robb  
Staff Writer

By now, most have heard that one cow in the United States has been found to have been infected with Mad Cow disease. The debilitating brain disease can cause illness and death to both the bovine and humans who eat the beef.

Sodexho, the company that runs NEIU's food services, gave a statement to The Independent assuring the safety of the food at

NEIU. They stated that they do not purchase beef from the farms that have been found to have affected cows.

Mad Cow is a disease that is spread primarily when cows are fed back beef by products as a supplement to their feed.

The U.S.D.A. insists that the beef supply is safe. The U.S.D.A. claims that Mad Cow is only carried in the brain and spinal column of the animal. Critics contend that nerve endings go

throughout the entire body of cattle, and that machines at slaughter houses do not cleanly remove all of the brain and spinal matter from the rest of the carcass. More so, stun guns used to stun the cattle often push brain matter back into other areas of the cattle.

The heard of the infected cow was traced to a farm in Canada. That farm has been quarantined and shipments of beef traced to several states across the United States. Illinois is not one of those

states.

Critics are also quick to point out that the U.S. has not implemented the same "Quick tests" that they used in England. The USDA is also changing rules regarding the use of cattle that cannot stand, stating they are not fit for the U.S. food supply.

Shortly after the outbreak, President Bush stated from his Crawford Texas ranch that he had eaten beef that day, and would continue to do so.



## IMPORTANT DATES

**January 19:** Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Holiday. No Classes.

**January 26:** Last day to drop classes for full refund. Must be completed by 9:45 pm.

**February 9:** Last day to drop classes for 50% refund. Must be completed by 9:45 pm.

**February 12:** Lincoln's birthday Holiday. No Classes.

**March 9:** Last day to drop classes for 25% refund. Must be completed by 9:45 pm.

**March 19:** Last day to drop classes. Must be completed by 9:45 pm.

**March 22 - 27:** Spring Recess.

**April 30:** Last day of classes.

**May 1:** Saturday classes final.

**May 3 - 5:** Finals!

## Immigration, from front page

rewarding those who break American law. Bush has answered these attacks by stating that this program will benefit homeland security. All applicants to the proposal will be registered and monitored by the government. If they lose their job, their employer is required to contact the government to inform them. This could mean immediate deportation.

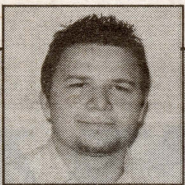
Immigrants will be given the opportunity to apply for residency or citizenship, but will be "encouraged to return to their home countries with financial incentive..." Incentives have been promises of retirement benefits and tax saving accounts.

Those who choose to stay would receive no benefits from the program, and would have to compete for the limited number of green cards issued each year. Currently only 140,000 are being handed out, but Bush has called for Congress to raise the limit.

Leaders from several Latino based organizations have expressed disappointment with the measure, stating that it does not adequately meet the needs of immigrants and their families.

The proposal is yet to go through Congress.





Patrick O'Brien

# The Last Word

## With a 4.0, Johnny can't write?

Johnny Haptonstall is one of the few souls who will escape college with perfect grades. Johnny has long been in the public eye at Northeastern, whether as a member of Student Government or as part of WZRD radio station. He has traveled extensively in Central America and speaks Spanish as well as most of us speak English.

He has done all of this more than competently, and was scheduled to graduate last month Summa Cum Laude, having never received less than an A in a course. His Board of Governors degree includes courses in History, Justice Studies, the Humanities, and other disciplines. Haptonstall is well spoken and passionate, and articulate to boot. Apparently, he is not competent in English, however.

Johnny waited until this past December 3<sup>rd</sup> to take the English Competency Exam, or ECE, a NEIU graduation requirement. He

says about his test performance: I wasn't trying to write an 'A' paper, I was trying to write a good paper and get out of there." What he didn't realize was just how difficult getting out of NEIU would prove. He found later that he had failed the exam, meaning his graduation could be delayed until May 2004.

Haptonstall went to see Dr. Masahiro Kasai, who oversees the testing program to appeal his results, and was told there was no appeals process, a fact that bewildered him. He remarked to Kasai, "How can there be no appeal process in your department?"

Johnny saw a major discrepancy in the test grading, which he detailed for the *Independent*. "On the third grading card, in which I received a 1, the lowest possible score, the test number printed on the card was not mine, and it was crossed out with a blue ink pen and my test number was written in next to it. In addition, the

grading was done in black ink, not the blue ink used to change the test number. This indicates a different individual wrote it at a different time." Haptonstall brought this to the attention of Kasai, and was told there was no mistake made.

Johnny reiterated his desire to have the grader contacted, and Kasai took his number and said the earliest he could contact the graders was the middle of the following week. Johnny told Kasai he couldn't graduate until May if the matter was not resolved by January 15<sup>th</sup>, but Haptonstall said Kasai was nonplussed: "He displayed no understanding of the urgency of the situation."

Now Haptonstall ponders his options, which means he's waiting for word from the Assessment Department about his grade.

I have read Haptonstall's paper several times, and have reviewed the grading criteria used, and cannot understand how he was failed on

two of three grading cards. His essay, while unspectacular, showed definitive command of the English language, there were no major grammatical errors, and he stuck to the subject matter he chose. One of the grades he viewed for his essay cited grammar as the reason he received a 1 grade on a scale of 6. The lowest possible grade!

There were some spelling errors, and his handwriting is less than beautiful, but overall, the paper met the ECE grade 4 criteria as "exhibiting satisfactory, but limited, control over organization, prose style, and mechanics." The paper also met this part of the grade 4 passing criteria: "Although there may be a few serious errors or numerous minor ones, they do not impede understanding or detract attention from the writer's ideas."

This is the minimum passing grade, and Haptonstall's paper easily met this standard. The spelling was

adventurous, but all other parts of the paper met the department's criteria. Someone dropped the ball here. Did all the graders have a "satisfactory command" of English when they reviewed his paper? I doubt it if this is the result.

Does the bare minimum grade for someone who has never received less than an A at Northeastern make sense? Who's competent now? The dozens of professor who taught Haptonstall over the years at NEIU, or several graders of a dubious test who may or may not have graded the right exam? How many tests do these individuals grade? Haptonstall was told by Kasai that they had graded thousands of papers. This is the kind of assembly line that promotes an occasional mistake being made, and that's acceptable, as long as it is admitted and fixed. So now we'll see if the people who test competency can exhibit some of their own.

## Quake destroys ancient city in Iran

### Professor mourns for loss of friends and family back home in Bam

by Tom Robb  
Staff Writer

One day, after Christmas 2003, a devastating earthquake destroyed the city of Bam, Iran. On December 30, 2003, Megan Noris of the Red Cross told Northeastern's Wizard Radio Station (WZRD) the death toll from the quake was confirmed at 25,000 (and has since reached 30,000) and could reach as much as 40 - 50,000 dead. Aid is flowing in from all over the world, to support in the rescue and recovery efforts.

The affect of the loss of life has been felt in Chicago and with in the NEIU community. Dr. Hamid Akbari, Chair of the Department of Management and Marketing at NEIU, is from Iran. Akbari stated that he has a large number of family and acquaintances that were lost in Bam, and that many Iranians in both Chicago, and those who he spoke with from Iran, were in a state of profound sorrow. Akbari visited Bam as a teenager and stated that he felt that he has lost a part of himself in this tragic loss.

Bam was an ancient and historic

city, which was on a trading route from Asia to the Middle East, and Europe called "The Silk Road." The 2000-year-old buildings in Bam were not earthquake proof, and most were completely destroyed. There is debate now in Iran as to whether or not to restore and rebuild its historic dome, or to leave it as it is, as a testament to the event.

There have also been miraculous stories of recovery. Al Jazeera is reporting one 53 year old man was recovered barely alive from the rubble 13 days after the quake, a 97 year old woman was found alive after a week under the rubble, and a six month old girl was found 37 hours after the quake in her dead mothers arms.

The quake has also offered some historic diplomatic events as well. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armatage spoke with Iran's representative to the U.N. shortly after the quake, the first time that the U.S. and Iran have formally spoken since the hostage crisis and Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979. Shortly there after, U.S. (non-military) rescue teams and two U.S.



photocourtesy of www.bbc.com

**Iranians mourn 30,000 death toll after the December 26 earthquake**

C-130 transports filled with relief supplies arrived in Bam to aid in the rescue effort. Alternately though, both President Bush and Iranian President Muhammad Khatami have made statements chilling what might have been an opportunity to open a dialogue that has been silent, if not hostile, for 24 years.

U.S. Sanctions against Iran have been relaxed in the wake of the quake. The International Committee of the Red Cross is working with the

Iranian Red Crescent on relief efforts. Noris stated that money rather than material donations are preferable, as it is easier to purchase materials in Iran rather than transport them there. Donations can be made to the Red Cross with instructions that it go for quake relief in Iran.

Akbari said that the people of Iran he was in contact with greatly appreciated the work of the American doctors and relief workers who responded to the quake.

## Saddam's capture brings closure for some

by Miriam R. Perteu  
Staff Writer

On March 17, 2003, President Bush declared to the world that Saddam Hussein and his sons had and leave Iraq. If they chose to oppose this ultimatum, the US would engage in military conflict against them.

This for some, was the beginning of a quest for freedom for the enslaved Iraqi nation. Saddam refuses to give up his power, and, from hiding, was bribing loyalists to carry out attacks against the coalition forces.

This lasted until December 13, 2003 when Saddam Hussein is captured nine miles from his hometown of Tikrit, in a raid called Operation Dawn, according to CNN.

Saddam was found in the town of Ad Dawr in a ventilated hole in the ground six to eight feet deep. Saddam surrenders without a fight. Reports depict him as being caught "like a rat in a hole."

When television sets tuned in to see his capture, viewers saw Saddam's vulnerability as he was examined by a gloved doctor. These images illustrated how dictators are isolated from their access to power.

Since his capture, Saddam has refused to cooperate with US authorities on any intelligence information. However, documents were found with him that shed light on enough information to lead to further operations.

Many believe much has been accomplished in the ousting of the regime of Saddam Hussein. It first began with the chasing of Saddam from his palace to the hole he was hiding and found in, ending in the toppling of Hussein's regime.

Now it is possible a new Iraq, a free Iraq, an Iraq who has the power to change its course of history will emerge.

## Union, Administration square off soon at table

by Andrea Zelinski  
Chief Editor

The Spring 2004 semester means more than simply teaching to professors this year. Faculty, staff, and administration are preparing to meet at the bargaining table in order to come to a consensus for two Union contracts to hold for 4 years.

The negotiations will address such issues as retention, faculty responsibilities and assignment of duties, etc. Negotiations will also address salary, but wages fluctuate in conjunction with state-government education funding to the university and are therefore difficult to negotiate.

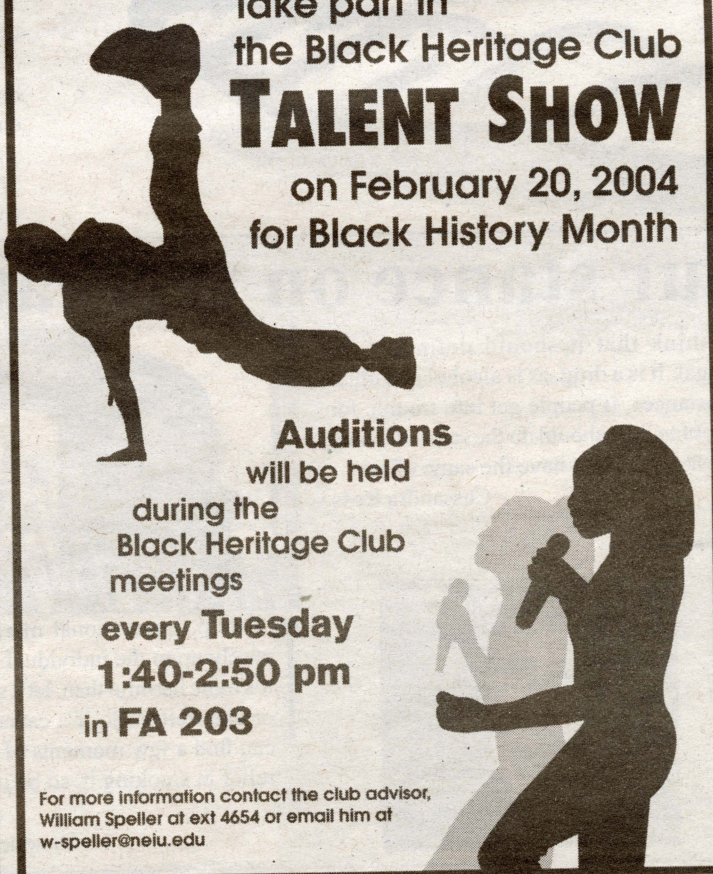
The two contracts negotiated are separated to cover two groups of employees: Unit A and Unit B. Employees covered in the Unit A contract are tenured or tenure-track faculty, librarians, counselors in the Counseling office, and some staff in the Dean of Student's office. Unit B employees are part time professors and university advisors.

Undisclosed sources categorized past negotiations as using a "win win" approach pro faculty. According to some sources, several administrators have ignored the contract stipulations as of late. As a result, more grievances have been filed against the university than in previous semesters. There is a concern among some faculty that academic integrity and the trust between the union and the university administration has been slowly eroding.

Administrators were not available for comment prior to publication.

The two contracts with the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI), the current union contract for Northeastern faculty and staff, will expire this August. Sources close to the negotiations say they may start as early as next month.

Take part in  
the Black Heritage Club  
**TALENT SHOW**  
on February 20, 2004  
for Black History Month



**Auditions**  
will be held  
during the  
Black Heritage Club  
meetings  
every Tuesday  
1:40-2:50 pm  
in FA 203

For more information contact the club advisor,  
William Speller at ext 4654 or email him at  
w-speller@neiu.edu



# Commentary

## To hit or not to hit, that is the question

### Weed could be a cash crop

by Amanda Moya  
Special Contributor

The legalization of marijuana is a long standing problem in America. Jails are full with offenders who were arrested with 20 grams or less, and amounts that would cause one to think twice about exactly how much 'weed' there really is in our country. So, the quickly growing issue for debate is whether or not it should be legal, and I feel it should be. The benefits of legal marijuana extend beyond the simple liberty of wandering my hometown without shaking in fear of being caught, or worrying about my door being kicked in while friends are being sedate and harmless to society within the confines of my home.

Firstly, if marijuana were legal, it would be regulated. It is easier for middle school kids to get hold of a joint than it is a pack of cigarettes. Marijuana is not for children; with a legal age for the purchase of marijuana, the least of our concerns would be if little Johnny is getting high in an alleyway with his 12 year old buddies. Of all the things our government has made legal, marijuana is definitely not the most harmful. This new campaign "Marijuana: it's more harmful than we all thought," honestly sets me into laughter. The most harmful thing one could do while high is clean out the kitchen, bump a car into a tree, possibly find love inside the bottom of an Edy's ice cream carton, or worst of all, gain more weight than possibly imaginable in one night. More so, it is not so much a question of whether marijuana should be legal because it's only as harmful (or less) than alcohol and cigarettes. What deserves to be questioned is why it was made illegal in the first place, while these others are accepted, and even pushed, by the mass media and society. Is there more going on then simple preference? You bet there is!

But, secondly, our economy could use the boost. So, if major growers, which include farmers, private nursery owners and even kids with impressive closets, were given the right to grow for the government, it would be regulated, taxed and sold much like cigarettes. They could be given government loans to grow, and there would be a guaranteed consumer, at any given time. Aside from the cash brought in, farmers would no longer have to rely on grocery stores to buy their crops or exhaust their soils by growing a crop that is profitable, but strips the soil. If farmers were to grow marijuana it would benefit the soil, and replenish nutrients for crops of corn, tomatoes, and grain.

So, thirdly, would be the obvious medicinal uses. AIDS patients, cancer patients, and along with the red blood cell count, are not directly boosted by medicinal marijuana. But indirectly, it can help a great deal. Naturally, along with the pain relief, a joint causes 'munchies' which would cause a patient who has no appetite to eat. This in turn strengthens the immune system with nutrients from foods, which is hands down better than some painful IV that shoots liquid vitamins directly into the system. It just isn't natural, and marijuana is. With the increase of nutrients, the white and red blood cell count rises, and this has a positive and noticeable effect on most patients. This isn't even taking into account that many of these patients also use the drug as a way to keep from falling into deep depressions over their illness and state of life. Though I guess we could just throw more Prozac at them, cause, "Hey, everyone is doing it!"

Regardless of how this issue is viewed, marijuana is not all bad. It does not cause anyone to go senselessly beat their significant other; it does not cause a family member to walk out - mostly because they are too stoned to get the energy to do so. Seriously though, the people who would do these sorts of vile things while under the influence of marijuana, would probably have done then anyway, stone sober. Or, alternately, done them more legally while being thoroughly drunk, which is an accepted form of intoxication in our society, one which has been proven time and again to lead to violence and abuse.

There are many very functional potheads out there, and whether we know it or not, most of them do have very important places in our society. In fact, you probably know quite a few, whether they're open with it or not. Pot is not bad, and neither is the pothead.

### I don't mean to be blunt...

by Cecilia Carboni  
Production Editor

Marijuana is a drug I have never really gotten along with. I have had many friends who used it and I tried to never really bring it up, because after all, each individual is capable of deciding for themselves. Whether it is legal or not is not my concern, other articles in this issue show my blatant disregard for some things the government finds illegal. What I can argue is that marijuana is not a harmless drug, that its frequent use can have serious repercussions, and that its use can be deadly when it falls into the bongs of less than responsible users.

The dioecious plant known as *Cannabis sativa* is one that more than a quarter of the American population is familiar with. Do we know what its health risks are? This plant contains over 400 chemicals in it, one of which is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC for convenience. This chemical is found in larger quantities today than it was in the 60's.

Marijuana smoke is inhaled deeper and held longer than cigarette smoke, causing the THC to be absorbed by the lungs faster. This means that one joint has four times the carcinogenic effect of one cigarette. One joint a day can cause pulmonary infections, respiratory cancer, and as one study mentioned, "...chronic bronchitis, impairment of smaller air passages, inflammation of the lung, the development of potentially pre-cancerous abnormalities in the bronchial lining and lungs..." A large proportion of oral, pharynx, and larynx cancer cases have been marijuana smokers. According to UCLA's Jonsson Cancer Center, marijuana causes "molecular alterations" in the respiratory tract, which is what may be leading to cancer. Marijuana also weakens the body's immune system.

Other studies have shown that THC "increases cannabinoid receptors and changes their chemical binding characteristics." The study is clear that scientists don't know how what role this plays in our health, but it essentially means that marijuana changes the molecular structure of the brain.

Researchers do however know full well what the hippocampus, a part of the brains limbic system, does. THC alters the way the hippocampus interprets sensory information, learning and memory. Pregnant women who smoke weed will have children with problems in the hippocampus, which will lead to poor visual perception, language comprehension, sustained attention, and memory. Behavioral problems have also been widely observed in these cases.

Most serious is that marijuana, especially when combined with alcohol, can trigger predispositions for mental disorders such as bipolar disorder, psychosis, and schizophrenia.

I hear many marijuana smokers argue that cigarettes and alcohol are far more unhealthy, as well as dangerous to others. No one high on pot ever gets violent like a drunk does, seems to be the answer. And yet alcohol and cigarettes are legal, they respond with a sly smile, despite the number of people it kills. So it seems logical to the arguers that we just add another dangerous drug to the list just to make it fair. Personally, I don't agree with smoking. I don't agree with drinking much more than a glass of wine with dinner on a holiday. Why those things are legal I don't know or care. It's like trying to justify pot by saying that me beating my children is okay because, you know, the next door neighbor just killed theirs. Marijuana's harm should be acknowledged as the independent entity that it is.

I can't tell people to stop smoking because their health is theirs. However, I can when that health is mine. One study of four million high school seniors found that 600,000 have admitted to driving under the influence of marijuana. Other studies test drivers in crashes for traces of THC, which could have been smoked weeks before, but this one actually tallies how many people get into a car with, or after, a joint. Those surveyed reported 38,000 car crashes related to driving under the influence of marijuana.

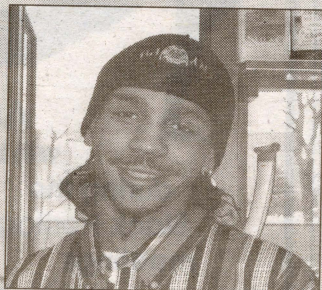
Marijuana is a serious drug. Just because it doesn't equal to cocaine or heroin doesn't make it safe. There are many statistics that show its influence in cases of child abuse or neglect. It's health risks are substantial, despite many pro-marijuana sites that claim the government invents it all just to spite users. I might not always trust them but anything that alters your mind more than caffeine can't be good for you.

## What is your stance on recreational Marijuana use?



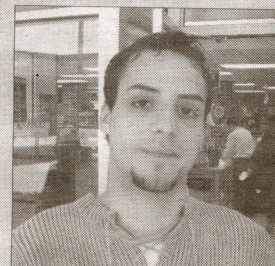
"I think that it should definitely be illegal. It is a drug, as is alcohol and other substances. If people get into trouble for drinking they should do the same with any substance(s) that have the same effect."

- Cassandra Ross



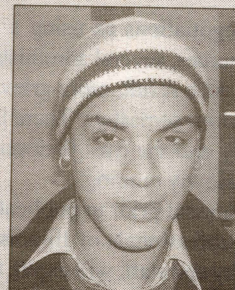
"I think [recreational marijuana] is purely up to the individual. I believe it's more harmful than, let's say liquor, or cigarettes. So if a cancer patient can find a few moments of deserved relief in smoking it, so be it."

- Dauone Johnson



"As long as you place yourself in a safe environment once in a while, it's ok."

- Hipolito E. Ramirez



"I think that people should not use it because it intervenes with your school work or other activities. If you are using it, just be responsible."

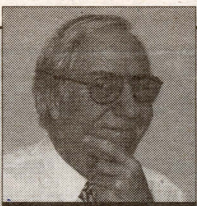
- Daniel Romero

"I think that people shouldn't use it because they don't need it."

- Nancy Carreno







JOE HERTEL

# Old Man on Campus *Disgusting Lifestyle Exposed!*

I am not the ideal of an individual in mainstream society.

I have a lifestyle which is abhorrent to many and indulged in by few, although I believe more people practice the act than will admit. I do not ask that you endorse what I do, but just allow me the basic right of an even playing field.

I first discovered my lifestyle at age eleven. I practiced my behavior in the bathroom and basement of my parent's house. My mother caught me in the act once and almost swooned, telling me, "Wait until your father gets home!" My father was more understanding, and told me that most everyone tries what I do at some time in their lives. He told me not to do it too much however, because it could cause certain health problems for me later in life.

I was again caught in the act in the toilet at high school. There were three of us doing it at the same time and I was almost suspended. But the teacher was tolerant, told us even he tried it a few times but got no pleasure from the experience, and encouraged us to stop.

My church condemned what I did, telling me that God was able to deliver me from this lifestyle. God seemed to remain silent on the subject, although church members constantly reminded me that my body was a temple and

I was desecrating it. They told me they loved me; yet denied me membership because of my behavior. I felt unworthy and dirty.

I tried to change but could not. I tried to hide it at first, but then realized this was part of me, and decided people would just have to respect my choice. After all, it's my body. When I came out of the closet (actually the basement), some of my friends ridiculed me and did not want to associate with me. Many females were repulsed when I engaged in my act in their presence, but I did meet some girls who also practiced this lifestyle and was accepted by them.

Those opposing my lifestyle constantly cite statistics and reports showing that my behavior is a drain on the economy, especially health care. They don't want us to work in close proximity to them because they are afraid of getting sick and catching some disease. They don't want us to teach; they are worried that I might influence their children to practice my lifestyle. Every day I am confronted with what borders on hate-speech by those who not only condemn what I do, but me as well for indulging in the practice. They are capnophobes!

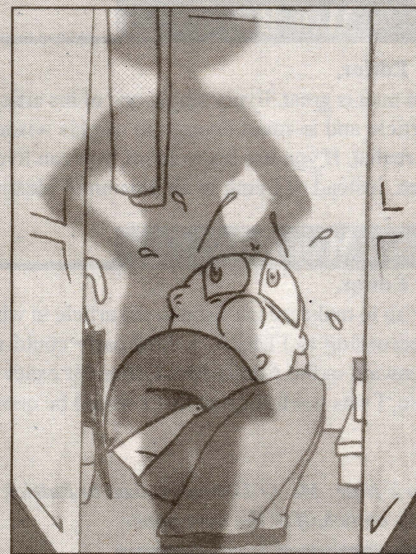
Yes, I am a (cough) smoker. I have been for 47 years. If people would look beyond the smoke, they would see I am a nice guy. I am protesting the way I have been treated

over the years as a marginalized member of society. It was subtle at first, but as the vocal majority against my lifestyle grew, accusations were made and liberties were rescinded. It is, I believe, a conspiracy, a smoke-screen, if you will, to take the public's attention away from the truly harmful pollutants of the military-industrial complex.

I could no longer smoke at work. At home, I found myself back in the basement. Restaurants became segregated; shopping malls and theaters, blatantly anti-smoking. Now, these misocapnists want to enact laws that make my lifestyle illegal in public. Even in bars!

Forty years ago, this university was more tolerant. We could smoke in the hallways and in the student lounges and cafeteria. Now we are relegated to the exterior of the buildings, which, although demeaning, is tolerable eight months of the year. But forcing us out into the bitter winter cold because they object to our lifestyle is cruel and unusual punishment. Therefore I make this one demand, on behalf of all NEIU smokers, male and female, faculty and student, straight and gay, Black and White and everyone in between: The implementation of campus indoor Safe Smoker Zones by the end of January, 2004.

I'm not kidding! Smoker's rights have been ignored for far too long. I am not asking



graphic by Cecilia Carboni

to restore our original liberties to smoke where we please, and I don't ask for special treatment, only fair. All I ask for is a few little nooks indoors someplace where we can enjoy a few puffs between classes without being harassed. If you agree, grab your butts and let's organize a smoke-in! Join GASPS (Great American Smoking Preservation Society) today! By the way, God finally did answer and, although I smoke, I know I ain't gonna burn!

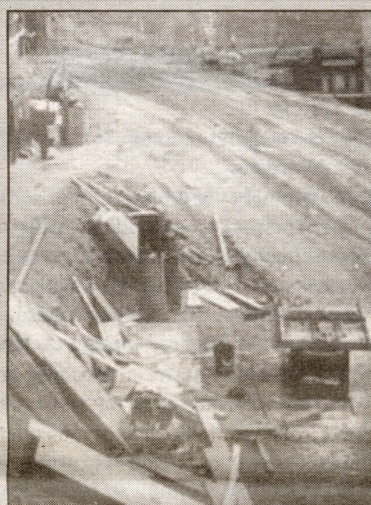
To join GASPS (not endorsed by NEIU) or just complain, write: OldManNEIU@aol.com

## Drawing Board

Cecilia Carboni



**Campus construction or parking got you down? Voice your choice in Commentary. Meetings are in E-049 Starting January 13th.**



## Immigrants have found themselves a rotten bone

by Cecilia Carboni  
Production Editor

Those of us who immigrate to this country do so in large part to escape the hardships of our home-countries. Be it political or economic, we all wish for a chance to give our families a better life. Some immigrants come to visit, and overstay their visas. Some risk their lives in the hands of coyotes to cross the harsh Rio Grande. 1,224 die every year with the words of the Statue of Liberty etched into their hopes.

There are now 8 million illegal immigrants living in the United States. The events of 9/11 have made the government's stance on the immigration issues tense. Negotiations between Bush and Mexico's president Vicente Fox were abruptly halted a couple days before the tragic date. Thousands of illegal workers were rounded up and deported in the weeks afterwards. The shift of focus to homeland security has made America a hard place to live.

Bush has now decided to throw immigrants what the old phrase would refer to as a "bone." His new immigration proposal is part of what he believes to be what America needs. In his words, it "reflects the American dream." I know many immigrants who anxiously tuned in to hear the details of what they thought would be a beacon in this post 9/11 society of foreign distrust. It sounded good at first but the more you delve into Bush's broad strokes, the more you realize this is not what you expected. The fine print is what makes this so deadly.

The claim is that illegal employees will not only get guaranteed wages, but that they will be able to report employers without fear. That sounds great, but the fine print is what turns this around. If you lose your job, it signifies immediate deportation. As Senator John Kerry stated, the proposal "rewards business over immigrants by providing them with a permanent pool of disenfranchised temporary workers who could easily be exploited." A worker knows that if they step out of line, they can get fired. The moment they are fired, their employer sends the government a notice. That government now knows exactly where to hunt them down.

So imagine that you are Senor Jose from Pakistan. You come to this country with your wife and kids. You work several years illegally and then one day on the news you hear about the proposal. You sign up, pay the registration fee, and prove that you worked at so and so factory for the last two years. You get the three-year work permit, renewable once. It is now a couple months until its expiration. What do you do? The program does not offer any steps toward residency or citizenship. You would have to hope that you can get one of the limited amount of green cards handed out each year. "Get in line," as many news sources have put it. What does the program expect from you? It expects the immigrant to return to their home country with the lure of financial incentives.

Over the time frame of 6 years, probably working minimum wage or close, and with a family to raise, how much are you going to save? Are the promises of retirement benefits going to really help your family

survive? It feels like Bush is trying to make us think we've won some big prize. Our eyes light up and in our happy daze we walk out with a big bundle in our arms. The problem is that we're going to find it empty when we get home, and back to where we started off from.

"He wants their sweat and labor, but he ultimately doesn't want them." New Jersey Democrat Bob Menendez might have a point here. However, there is something more Bush wants from them: their votes. It seems like many politicians; especially the ones with anti-immigration stances, don't realize that immigrants are people. Illegal ones as well. Immigrants are not parasites. The people that complain that immigrants suck up all their jobs probably don't realize that immigrants actually buy things as well. Each year those 8 million people spend money on clothes, food, entertainment, housing, and cars. Immigrants stimulate the economy.

In general, I remain very skeptical of this measure. It would be a blessing for many to be able to get a work permit and get a paycheck legally. No one wants to be illegal just for the fun of it, despite how some conservatives like to make it seem. They say that these people are lawbreakers. Stealing a TV is breaking the law, selling drugs is breaking the law, but striving to feed your children by working 14 hour days is not. Immigrants need solutions and Bush doesn't seem to have them. He's just hoping for illegal immigrants to turn themselves in.

I think that laborers should have a chance to pursue Lady Liberty and her ideals. The denial of that pursuit would be a great hypocrisy in the face of such a great woman. Remember, if you are American, it's because someone took a chance and took the boat over.

**Want your opinion read by thousands?  
Stop by E-049 to find out how!**



# Letters to the Editor

## MAIL BAG

Dear Editor,

Old man is great. Every single one of his articles are so true, but the last is just pure wisdom. I hope that everyone reads the article and is smart enough to use his wisdom. His article is truly a great portrayal of reality. He is not a pessimist, but a realist. If you use his wisdom, you can live being ready for the worst and being happily surprised when good things happen, instead of living in an illusion of idealism.

Renata Lis

## MAIL BAG

Dear Editor,

I wish to make a correction to the article in which I was incorrectly quoted. I spoke to Joe Hertel and said that I believed that according to FERPA, a third party could view a student record with that party's permission, but to contact Alice Medenwald in the Admissions Office for exact information, as she is a very reliable and informed on the FERPA law.

Also, I was not informed that I would be quoted. Please see that a retraction is printed

Mary Ellyn O'Donnell  
Office of the Dean of Students

Editor's Note: Ms. O'Donnell talked to Patrick O'Brien, Production Manager who notified her he was making an inquiry on behalf of the newspaper.

## MAIL BAG

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the letter from members of the Socialist Club. They claim that they are being robbed by the rich. Actually, the government is stealing from the rich. The top 5% of wage earners are stuck paying 53% of all federal income taxes. The rich are forced to pay for programs which are of no use to them. The poor pay very little taxes and get too much in return. The government is way too generous in providing them with a free education, which they take for granted. The rich pay for the programs which aid and support the poor. How are you being robbed?

The attack on affirmative action is just. Affirmative action takes away a business owner's right to run his business as he pleases. It is an outrage that this ridiculous policy is used in the hiring of our police officers and firefighters. If you are in need of their help, wouldn't you want those who are best at what they do?

We, as citizens of a United States, should decide how our money is spent. Instead, due to the left, we are being forced to pay for programs which we don't agree with. The government has grown into an institution which is taking away our basic rights. Anyone should have the right to donate money to charitable organizations if they so choose. However, the government should not have the right to steal money that the rich have earned through hard work, and give it to people who should work harder.

John Tait  
Proud Republican

## MAIL BAG

Dear Editor,

Hate is a negative emotion. It is a well-known psychological fact that if an individual is confronted with hate, his learning ability decreases.

It is extremely disturbing to find, occasionally, in the hallways of the Northeastern University, hate groups voicing or imposing their views on students. Adolph Hitler lived surrounded with hate groups since his childhood and adolescence, and consequently, expressed his hatred towards those groups, in a very regrettable time in history.

Northeastern University has a student exchange program where students from different countries of the world are given admittance temporarily. Some of these students could be the sons or daughters of diplomats who come from pacifist or neutral countries. If these foreign exchange students are suddenly and abruptly confronted with hate groups on campus, they will probably suffer a shocking and unpleasant experience. This unpleasant experience will become the source of conversation when they return to their countries. Authorizing admittance to so-called hate groups, on Northeastern University's main hallway, is opening the door for future problems that could probably jeopardize diplomatic relationships with other countries. These hate groups are being viewed as low-scale terrorists.

If a student pays tuition to take a designated course, safety should not only be provided in the classroom, but also throughout the entire University campus: hallways, parking lot, rest rooms, lounge room, etc.

Good economies depend on foreign exchange trade with other countries, importing and exporting of goods and services is a worldwide activity. United States companies and citizens have opened businesses in countries all over the world and enjoyment of peace and respect for their rights create a beneficial environment, not only for them, but for everybody.

Let's say good-bye, permanently, to hate groups on campus and welcome only pacifist groups that can bring constructive lectures, seminars or something beneficial to the growth of beautiful minds at Northeastern.

Maria C. Rosales

## MAIL BAG

Dear Editor,

Why does Elana Barron (Independent, Nov. 18, 2003) still fret over whether Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction when the Bush administration has already abandoned that lie as it's excuse for invading Iraq?

The question is not and never was whether Saddam possessed such weapons, but whether George was telling the truth when he told Americans and the world that he knew Saddam had them. Clearly he was lying, and he will have had even if the weapons were eventually discovered because when he made the statement no weapons inspectors had been in Iraq for years; so no one outside of Iraq could possibly know if it had such weapons. But George claimed he knew, and every reasonable person had to conclude that he could not know and therefore had to be lying when he said he did. Nor has he or Colin Powell or anyone else ever presented any evidence to prove that anyone in the administration had credible knowledge of Weapons of Mass Destruction. George lied, and now and forever that case is a closed. Nor is there any evidence for the new charge—that Iraq was involved in terrorist activity.

This administration's unprovoked on a sovereign country has unquestionably made Americans more, not less vulnerable to terrorist attacks now and in the foreseeable future. It has diverted resources and personnel from a concentrated attack upon terrorist cells and incensed many throughout the world. Terrorists are not after all targeting Swedes or Brazilians or even French or German nationals. The attacks are against Americans, Brits, and Italians—citizens of countries that are engaged in the military invasion and occupation of Iraq.

Let's not get dragged into a debate in which the administration and its supporters set the terms. Let's pose other questions. Like what is the difference between the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and our invasion of Iraq? The Japanese didn't tell us they were coming.

If the Nazi's transported individuals and held them indefinitely without being charged with a crime, without being brought to trial, without the protection of national or international law, how does that differ from what the Bush administration has done at Guantanamo, Cuba? To remove these persons beyond the protection of international or any other law, Bush insists that they are not prisoners of war. Why doesn't he honestly call them what they are? Inmates of a concentration camp set up by his administration.

After all is said and done, what is the fundamental, crucial difference between Hitler's Germany and Bush's America? The difference is that Americans live in a democratic country with access to information that Germans could not get with the ability to question and criticize their government without serious reprisals. And now they are confronted with a totally lawless regime which has already killed more people and destroy more property than any number of September 11th's, but no American can claim what many Germans did, that they do not know. A majority of Americans are like Elana Barron in that they willingly support Bush's murderous policies. The blood runs through every lying, misleading column misreporters like her write. More so than the Germans under Hitler or the Russians under Stalin, these Americans must bear the democratic responsibility of being their government's willing executioners.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT: Wayne Lela of Heterosexuals Organized for a Moral Environment writes in the same issue of *The Independent* that homosexuals discriminate against "necrophiliacs, even if they are consenting adults." Since Mr. Lela is so knowledgeable about all things sexual, my question to him is: How do you get a corpse to consent? And how long do you wait before concluding that even a dead woman doesn't want to have anything to do with you?

Harry White  
Dept. of Eng.

## VOICE OF THE CAMPUS

# Holiday Traditions



JENNI LADA

It's once again that magical time of year when we all gather together with family and friends to celebrate the holidays. Of course, with these happy occasions also comes a time when we all grow fat together and then vow to change that when the New Year comes.

Usually, with my family, the Christmas feast has always had an element of surprise and excitement to it. The main reason for this is because of a basic tenet of wisdom in my grandpa's kitchen, where all the holiday meals are cooked. Ironically, this tenet is also responsible for a slightly disturbing gift giving tradition in the family. The one basic element that always rings true in his house is: "Don't worry, that's still good. The fridge keeps it cold."

So generally whenever a holiday meal is prepared, a whole battle plan goes into effect. The basic idea is to manage to clean out the refrigerator in the normal fashion, which consists of us dumping that which has changed colors, smells, or is moving, and releasing it into the wild. However, my grandpa, following his wisdom that the fridge contains magical properties preventing any food from ever spoiling, believes this is an opportune time to finally finish off all those leftovers or great deals he discovered. For example, this year's meal almost featured a three month old cake from K-Mart (which was a day old when bought, but according to him the freezer was rejuvenating it), and a carton of eggs from two weeks before that nearly made its debut in the stuffing.

Of course due to the brilliant tactics implemented by my mother, who strongly believes that any holiday hospital visits should be caused by other family members and not the dinner, everyone made it through safely.

In a way though, it is because of this little quirk that another Christmas tradition was born. A few years back, while my mother was cleaning out the pantry, a jar of mayonnaise from the mid-90's was discovered in the back. Upon bringing it upstairs to the garbage, my grandpa spied this action, and tried to prevent her removing the hazardous waste. "The factory seal is still on it. It's still good. Just pop it in the fridge for a little while. It'll be fine." He said while removing it from the garbage can and placing it in the fridge.

It was only a few minutes later that I, having heard the whole discussion, sprung into action in hopes of actually removing the offending article from the premises. Stupid me. A feat like this had been tried before with a jar of Karo syrup, from under the sink, that was growing mold. The Karo syrup was like a legendary creature, each trash day rising from the can like the phoenix rising from the ashes. It was months until it was finally removed, and that was only because it was thrown out at mall garbage can 2 blocks away.

So a few days later the mayonnaise had also returned, just like the mythical Karo syrup before it. Instead of being deterred by the turn of events, my parents, whom are responsible for my twisted sense of humor and, at times, are sick individuals, found a good way to get the mayonnaise out of the house.

Christmas Eve came and we were celebrating with my uncle, aunt, cousin, and grandpa. After the meal we exchanged gifts. My uncle was extremely pleased with one box my family had given him. His face glowed as he opened the package to see a Swiss Colony cake box before him. It wasn't until he and his family returned home and opened the actual box that the horrible truth was revealed. The mayonnaise had become the prodigal condiment, spreading holiday cheer to whoever's path it crossed.

This tradition actually now has expanded to include any form of holiday where a gift can be wrapped and disguised, making its way to each person on a merry adventure. However the original mayonnaise is actually missing in action, we are beginning to believe that it might be vacationing in Florida this year. But not to worry, the fridge has provided us with yet another jar, from 1998, that is currently aging next to an old can of crescent rolls and will probably be ready for Christmas 2004.

## LETTER POLICY

Letters to the Editor must be signed, contain an address and telephone number for verification, and must be approximately 300 words in length or less.

Letters are subject to editing for style and space at the editor's discretion. The Editor reserves the right to omit any work received. Letters are published on a first come first serve basis. Letters may be received through mail addressed to:

The Independent, Room E-049  
5500 N. St. Louis Ave  
Chicago, IL 60625

Letters are also accepted through electronic mail, provided they include a telephone number and address for verification. The address is [neiu\\_independent@yahoo.com](mailto:neiu_independent@yahoo.com).



# Idol's "Soulful" endeavor lacks just that

by Benny Boyas  
Staff Writer

Fox television studios struck gold for two years in a row with last season's largely followed series *American Idol 2*, which sought out fresh, original musical talent from all parts of the country, in all brands of styles. Many will argue that the shows success rested on the whimsical ridicule of the pathetically untalented contestants stemming from Simon Cowell, one of the resident judges on the show's triumvirate. Nonetheless, last year's top winner, Ruben Studdard, managed to provide audiences with exciting performances, especially with his renditions of classic works. And it was in this period of time that the quest for what the music industry so desperately needs, in times of lagging CD sales, had seemed to come to a pleasant end. Ruben Studdard was exalted, lauded, and even given his own holiday back in his home state of Alabama on behalf of the Governor.

But it was back in May when Ruben Studdard took home the gold. Yet the masses that tuned in and voted him America's next Idol waited patiently for his first album, and continued to wait some more, with hopes that allowing him to

Ruben's new album is missing the "stuff" to create musical genius.

marinate in his creative juices would make it a sure masterpiece. And so it came forward, on this 9th day of December, in the 2003rd year of our Lord. And it could not have been a bigger disappointment, rivaled only by the sequel to the movie *Saturday Night Fever*, with its inability to capitalize on the talented Mr. Studdard, whom the production crew was divinely blessed with. Yet still, some works on *Soulful*, Studdard's debut release, come off

as passion filled and creative. "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart" and "Superstar" are by far the best arias found here, for they definitely illustrate the unbelievable versatility of his voice that garnered him the top spot in the nationally televised competition. "Flying Without Wings" and "For All We Know" both add an added touch of triumph and victory to the albums ambience. And besides showing off his lustrous lower and higher ranges, "After the Candles Burn" rivals Beyoncé Knowles' "Speechless" as the best song to make love to coming out of this last year. In fact, there is no real hateful song present on the album. But the album overall lacks cohesion, structure, and focus.

The problem with *Soulful* lies not in the virtuoso department, for his voice clearly resonates with warmth, tenderness, and tremendous power. The issues here clearly seem to lie within those staffed to produce a surefire success with Ruben's artistic infancy. *Soulful* comes across as too ambitious of an endeavor, especially for an up and coming, inexperienced performer. The Ruben Studdard America fell in love with crooned the gospel, as well as old-school love songs. The Ruben Studdard the nation cheered for made us believe that a poor, Southern country boy could defy all odds and emerge as a truly original artist in the days of saturated, over-synthesized junk for the masses. But this magic carpet ride comes to a screeching halt, much to the world's dismay.

In addition to the imaginative works already cited, the album is plagued with too many attempts to appeal to every single listener in the realm of record sales. The use of verbatims, in the style of hip-hop rappers Jay-Z and Eminem speaking into the microphone, and the utilization of ultra-cheesy Velveeta beats, a la gangsta rapper 50 Cent, make this project an all too large-scale oriented one, while sadly sacrificing the love song and church hymn tenderness of Studdard. The mere fact that Studdard collaborates with gospel great Fred Hammond on one of his own works, "We Have Not Forgotten," while dueling up with Fat Joe in what would hardly enumerate to worship music by any means, "What is Sexy" ("Sex me, baby we can get closer, freaky, up in the crib come on over, sex me, you're so sexy!") illustrates the obvious lack of direction and the focus on mass-appeal of the overall album. Ruben contradicts himself repeatedly in style, grammar, and issues of faith, yet it would hardly be fair to solely blame him alone. Fox should publicly apologize for the laughable ensemble it put together for this potential mega hit wonder, and make up for this dismal debut with a follow up that includes names like Stevie Wonder or Quincy Jones as some of its artistic directors. Maybe then we will the true essence of Ruben Studdard be captured. And maybe then will his name be branded into the role call of greatness he is so richly qualified for, and so rightfully deserves to join.

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CD REVIEW

Photo courtesy of images.yahoo.com

## What does it truly mean to be free?

### An American Rhapsody will leave you with ideals of an American life

by Joe Hertel  
Staff Writer

One can live in a free country and still be a prisoner of themselves. Every so often a movie is released that makes us not only think, but identify with the characters and their quest for meaning in life. Such is the overlooked and seldom seen film by writer/director Eva Gardos. *An American Rhapsody* stars Nastassja Kinski, Scarlett Johansson, Tony Goldwyn and Lisa Jane Persky. It was released in August of 2001, in Hungarian/English with subtitles.

It is a story about a family that escapes communist Hungary in the late 1950's, and, due to their desperation and poor planning, they leave their small daughter behind. The little girl is then raised by two people not related to her, friends of her parents, who love her as their own and whom she comes to regard as her mother and father. It is not until six years later that she is whisked away, through the efforts of her grandmother, to be reunited with her true parents in sunny California. And this is just the beginning of the story.

Her arrival in the United States is celebrated by all except little Szuzsi, who is now called Suzanne. She misses her Hungarian "parents" and finds it difficult to accept her current status. It is heart wrenching when her true mother bends over and kisses her good-night, and the little girl responds, "Good-night, lady." Later, when the mother tries again to show her love, the girl again responds unexpectedly with, "Then why did you leave me?"

The scene changes as Suzanne becomes a teenager, and with wonderful camera direction, we view her through the chain link fence, the bars on her window, her door locked from the outside, and we realize she is a prisoner in her own home. Rebellious and searching for answers, she decides to return to Hungary. She implores her father,

who made a promise to her years before, that if she was not happy here in America, he would buy her ticket back to Hungary. He keeps his promise, and she returns to the people and land she knew before in the hopes of discovering where she belongs.

It is a wonderful film showing us the meaning of liberation and the concept of "home." It is even more touching because it is a true story, as we find out at the end, when the film is dedicated to "my mother and father." We don't know much about the writer/director Eva Gardos, but I have a suspicion that there is very much of her in the character of Szuzsi.

This is a film that is meant to be savored and enjoyed. It gives us an insight into what is "family" and that idyllic peasant childhood memories of a European post-WWII countryside, and even all the modern conveniences of a 1960's California lifestyle, cannot replace the feeling of belonging. It brings the viewer into an understanding of what all refugees must feel when they leave their homeland and venture to a new life in a foreign environment.

It is not a film about the wonders of liberty in the United States, or of the oppressiveness of a cold-war communist regime in Hungary. It is a film about a little girl, and the world through her eyes, and how she comes to terms with who she is and where she belongs as she matures into a teenager discovering herself. And we see the love and frustration of her parents, both biological and foster, trying to help her and guide her to understanding and acceptance.

The film struck me since I had spent many years in the Vietnamese community in Chicago's Uptown area. I have witnessed first hand the desire of young people, especially Amerasians, to return to Viet Nam in search of their roots. They were whisked from their homeland in the great migration of the late 70's and early 80's as children, and now, as young adults, feeling alienated in this country, felt a need to find their identity by returning to their birth home.

It is a film you might catch on HBO in the early morning, or maybe find in a cranny at a video store. You will probably have to ask for it. But it is worth seeing. It is not a film to just sit and watch though, because it will draw you into the lives of these people and you will respond emotionally. It doesn't offer answers, but offers direction, and it will make you feel a little better about life liberty and the pursuit of happiness.



This film combines ideal American families and love for their homeland.

Photo courtesy of images.yahoo.com

MOVIE REVIEW



# The Myths of Mesple: Towards Timelessness

Mesple, a Northeastern alum, creates images of undying splendor. His work is presented in Ronald Williams Library.

by Chad Nelson  
REV Editor

Images and myths go hand in hand, from early drawings of animals on cave walls to the stained glass windows of Medieval Europe. The images create a concrete representation of the events, and the myths, verbal or written, bring the images to life, making mental movement of the inert illustrations. James Mesple, a N.E.I.U. Alum, as well as a well respected and acclaimed artist, whose work is now on display in the Ronald Williams Library, continues the tradition of linking images to myth. He supersedes the expected connection though, to draw out questions and criticism of the form.

Mesple was kind enough to give me a guided tour of his work, complete with stories and background, while he was installing the works. Mesple will be speaking about his work later this month in a lecture whose date will be announced shortly. The story that piqued my interest most was connected to his painting *Diana of the Dunes*. The story he told goes like this.

In 1910, Alice Grey graduated from the University of Chicago, the campus of which incorporated buildings from the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. One could say university's history has its beginnings in a site where the "world's" great discoveries had been displayed. Ms. Grey studied Astronomy, seeking to know the beginnings of the universe, but was told after graduation that no jobs were available for a woman to teach at a university or to work as a professional scientist. Instead of fighting through the law, which probably would not have done anything at that time, she left Chicago. She moved to the Indiana Dunes, near Chesterton, with bow-and-arrows, some provisions and tools, and built herself a small shack hut to live in. Grey spent more than 15 years in the Dunes. While living there she became interested in local flora, and often spent time at the local Chesterton library researching and classifying plants she found. Stumped by a plant that resembled an orchid but defied known classifications, she published her findings in the local newspaper. Her article was picked up through news-wire by two members of the Smithsonian Institute, who immediately

hopped a train to the small town by the Great Lake, and what they found was astonishing.

The flowers were prehistoric species of orchids from before the last ice age. As a result the Dunes were declared a National Treasure, and were preserved from planned bulldozing of the area and the construction of bungalow style homes, the 1910 version of Condo complexes. Somewhere along the line Grey picked up the moniker "Queen of the Dunes." Afterwards, Grey continued living in her shack in the Dunes till she was found frozen to death during the brutal winter of 1929.

Every year now, the people of Chesterton celebrate the Fourth of July by nominating a young girl to be the "Queen of the Dunes" for the day, to celebrate and honor Grey's work and her life. She has become a legend, a myth. Mesple's painting of Grey is beautiful and shocking. A recurrent image in many of his works, a tiny silhouette of the modern Chicago skyline, appears in the background, an anachronistic clue linking her story to the present. What role, it seems to ask, does this woman's actions have on us, this story many have never heard, this life she led? Furthermore, how do we begin to understand those connections? Mesple answer is produced when you understand what he asks and says in his other paintings.

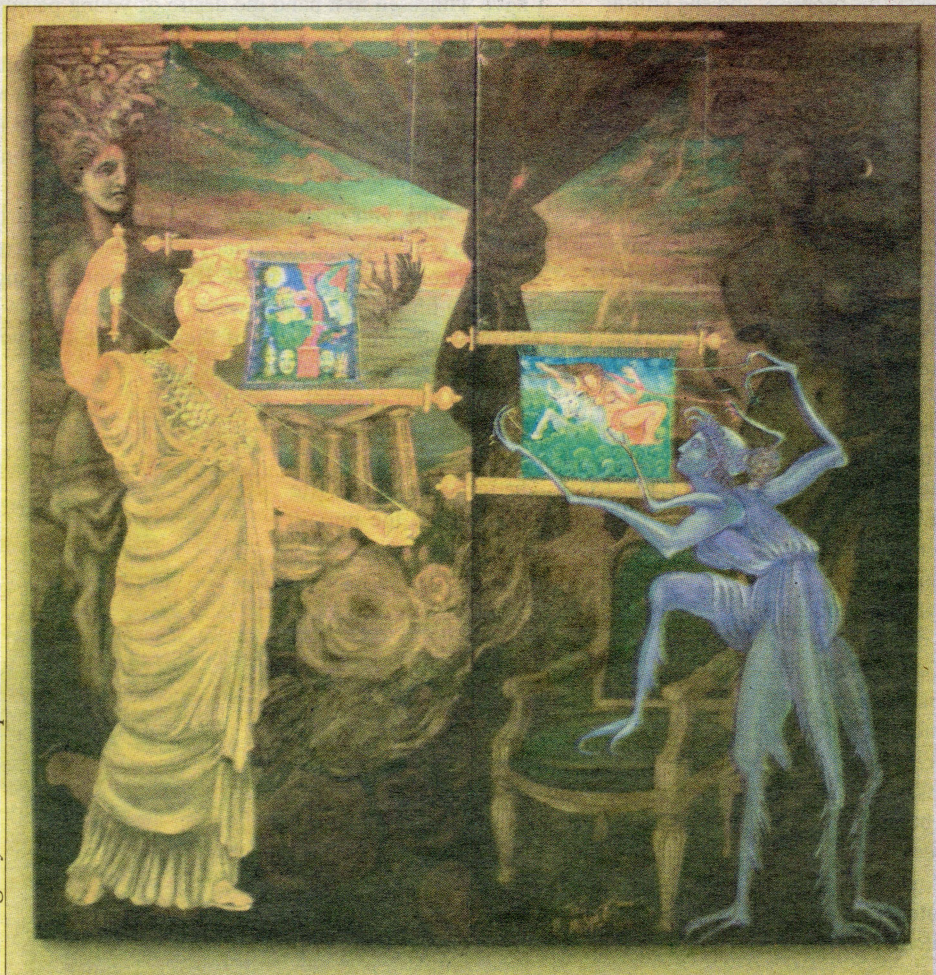
Mesple's work celebrates the significance and vitality of myth and story across temporal boundaries. While the abundance of Greek Myth at first appears to be to overwhelm, the subtexts of his paintings, the interplay between meanings produced in each painting, produce a dense and sublime weaving together of images and ideas, a swirl of criticism and praise, of doubt and possibility, that transcends the initial façade of *re-presentation* of "classics." He transposes classical images with modern ones, subverting the notion that the meaning of myth is relegated to the past, or that new myths cannot replace or even coincide with the old.

*Redfeather Goddess* presents an ambivalence about American history through image juxtaposition. Mesple explained that his inclusion of the picture of Redfeather of the Osage tribe was a representation of his own heritage, as well as a nod to the fact that interest in Native American methods for interaction with nature has increased, particularly in the last decade, he noted. The picture above, bearing an obvious likeness to the Statue of Liberty but with Native American style headdress, is a subtle but piercing gaze at the mythology of America. While Lady Liberty signified the freedom and chance for a better life for many immigrants, it symbolizes death and dispossession for millions of indigenous inhabitants. Further, the piece composed on a kite, which calls to mind the tale of Benjamin Franklin

discovering electricity. The myth of the "self-made man" that surrounds Franklin, and that America is supposedly built on, is treated rather ambivalently by Mesple. He makes no definite claims, but asks question and makes us think.

Mesple consistently uses astral imagery, moons and stars, planets and cosmos, as a metaphoric presentation of timelessness. *Transits of Venus* takes up this task most deftly, weaving multiple histories and myths, creating a fabric of infinite imagination and beautiful craftsmanship. The face of Venus is based on the Renaissance model that Da Vinci used for *Lady with an Ermine*, and in the background sits the modern Chicago Skyline, barely peeking behind the massive goddess, but present nonetheless. Above, the sun is traversed by the small blue planet Venus, issued almost umbilically from the hair of its namesake. Along the edges, dates from the past six centuries proclaim the days when the planet Venus transited the face of the sun, which will next happen June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Mesple's inspiration came from a book by Northwestern Professor Maor that gives this history of Venus' transit as well as a to-the-second prediction of its appearance over Chicago's sky. The conflation of multiple times and histories, the varied beliefs to explain the presence of astronomical phenomena, from mythology to science, present in this painting highlight Mesple's sense of wonder and inquiry. Providing modes of understanding, these diverse yet connected moments induce the kind of pensive reflection that art always seems to be intending. It is social commentary in the most sublime form.

Even more so, Mesple's ruminations, despite being years apart, interact and make meaning together. As I was soaking in "Transits of Venus," thinking about the wonder and amazement of staring into space, and thinking about how it got started, I couldn't help but think of Alice Grey. Graduating in 1910, she would have been studying the universe with many brilliant contemporaries, Albert Einstein standing out most notably. Who knows what her brilliant mind could have discovered had she been given the chance. Perhaps she would have the huge exhibit at the Field Museum celebrating her life and life's work, as Einstein does right now. Then it hit me. Standing in this university library in the big city by a Great Lake, I was seeing exactly how myths and legends get created. It had always been right in front of my eyes...and it sure as hell wasn't someone like Alice Grey. But sometimes, all it takes is one person to paint a picture, take a stand, or ask the right questions, and suddenly whole new worlds appear. The pockets of meaning and beauty that get overlooked everyday because they aren't in museums or books or History Channel documentaries, are there nonetheless. Mesple sees them, and he's showing us. Come take a look.



Paintings by James Mesple

His paintings have a myriad of meanings through the colors and images that transcends time itself.





REV

## MOVIE REVIEW

## Tradition and the West clash through story and time

by Tom Robb  
Staff Writer

*The Last Samurai* is one of the most moving and powerful movies that has come out in a very long time.

Set in 1876, Tom Cruise plays a veteran who fought under Custer and is haunted by the demons of what he saw and did. After



climbing into a bottle to stave off those demons and living off his name as a war hero, he is offered a job to modernize and train the Japanese army to fight rebel Samurai.

After an early battle he is captured by the Samurai and lives among them. There he comes to understand



Photos courtesy of movies.yahoo.com

Cruise captures the glory and horrors of battle.

his life and the way of the Samurai. To give away more would ruin it.

This is a large epic drama which pits the traditional ways of the Samurai against the pull for western modernization. It is a story of one man and one nation's struggle to find their identities. It shows the horrors of war and the honor of the warrior at the same time. It shows the power of sacrifice, redemption and forgiveness.

The cinematography is beautiful, grand and intimate, the battle scenes are comparable in realism, drama and spectacle to *Brave Heart*, *Glory*, or *Saving Private Ryan*. Tom Cruise goes from a bitter drunk to the most honorable hero, and the movie's supporting cast is also magnificent.

This movie will move you, will sweep the Academy Awards, and is something that absolutely must be seen.

REV

## BOOK REVIEW

## Dyson heralds return of new King

by Patrick O'Brien  
Production Manager

So telling the truth about a man is "doing the white man's job for him." Or so critics of Michael Eric Dyson's 2000 book *I May Not Get There With You* would seem to believe. Dyson's book takes on the sanitized image of Martin Luther King Jr., and shatters the common myth that he was a simple and sweet country preacher worried only about black civil rights. It also engenders the type of abuse possible when someone courageously questions the saintly image of a man of King's greatness.

Stripped of the sheen of mythology and legend that makes our heroes unbelievable, Dyson makes King all the more human, and as I see it, all the more valiant as he struggled on several fronts to lift up those who had been down for so long. Fighting the anger of many blacks who want King left untouched by his critical brush, Dyson walks a fine line of scholarship and cultural criticism, producing a fascinating portrait of King that lays bare a complex man who answered to many advisers, aides and issues, but always followed his conscience.

What is most controversial about *I May Not Get There With You* is Dyson's inclusion of information from Ralph David Abernathy and others concerning infidelities committed by King while away from his wife and family over the course of his career. Dyson explains why this part of King must be examined: "King's true greatness can be understood only when we get rid of the false expectations of human perfection in our heroes and leaders."

What is of greater interest to me is Dyson's take on parts of King that have largely been ignored by the mainstream press and Middle America. Both his supporters and his critics, in addressing both his legacy and his shortcomings, have largely ignored the speeches King gave on economic inequality and against the Vietnam War in his later years. King was on many fronts accused of Communist activities, but his ideas about Democratic Socialism and redistribution of wealth have never been widely discussed in the media.

Few talk about the persistent opposition even his most conservative ideas about these subjects received at the time, when publication such as *U.S. News*, *World Report*, and *Newsweek* accuse him of being a "confused preacher" and a "country bumpkin" who knew nothing outside the sphere of civil rights.

In reality, much of our country has agreed, choosing to focus on his optimistic, "I Have A Dream" days, instead of the words he spoke about parts of America we want to forget exist. Those parts of the Northern ghettos in Chicago that endure till this very day; areas of this very city where poverty and violence are a nightmarish way of life, where Martin Luther King Boulevard is punctuated by broken windows and the destruction of despair. This part of King we have decided is not worth celebrating,

the part that cannot be explained so easily to third-graders with superlatives and the amnesia so common to Americans now.

Dyson helps us find the King that had to change his mind about America, when King realized that most whites were racist, consciously or unconsciously, and that more than faith in the goodwill of men would be needed to change the conditions of blacks and all disadvantaged groups in America.

Later, Dyson also explores King's remarkable similarities and differences to slain rapper Tupac Shakur, and King's views on women and his patriarchal roots, which shaped his view of the sexes. All in all, a great read worth the \$15 cover price. Should be available at just about any bookstore. (Maybe even Beck's!)

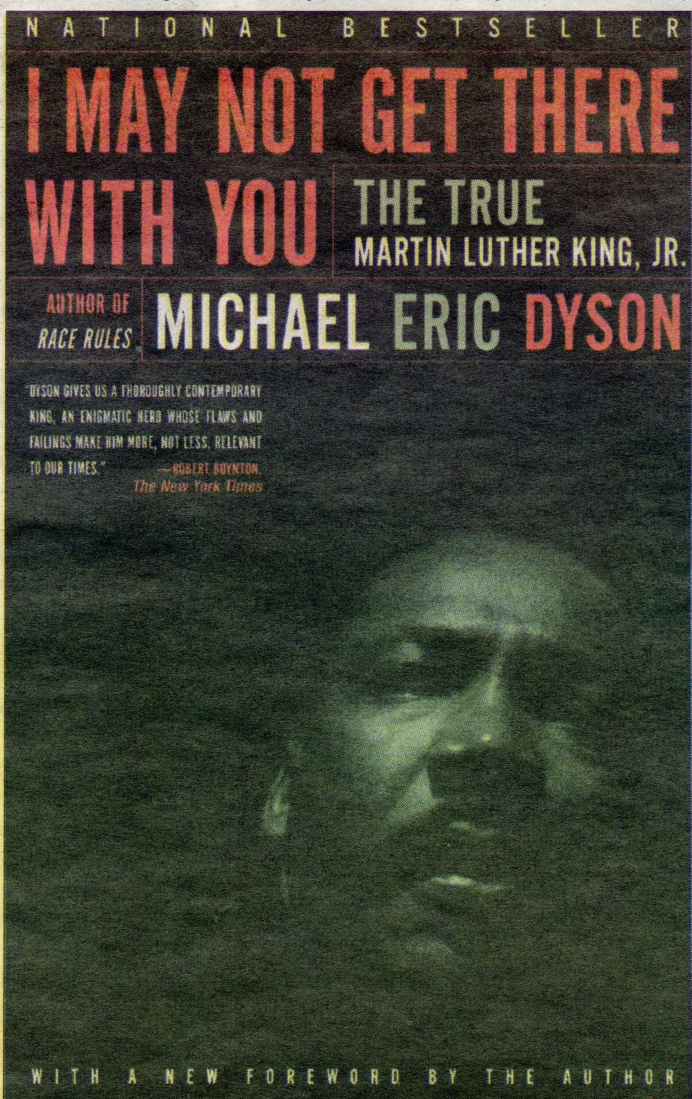


Photo courtesy of Simon &amp; Schuster

Controversy gets raised with the issues in Dyson's Book.

REV

## CD REVIEW

Dis' CD will  
git ya flowin'  
mad styleby Dan Demchuck  
Distribution Manager

I ran inta dis' cat and his brotha the otha' day. 'Dey was bof' dressed in some bright-ass get ups, and I guessed right when I was like, "Ya'll headed to da' club, huh." 'Ol boy in red wit' da M on his hat said we gotsta fly if we gonna get dere befo' all the ladies is taken.

So he tossed his bro'a feather, and he gave me a leaf, and as soon as I touched dat shit it was like, "Poof!" and bla-dow! I had a racoon's tail! Deez two cats was wearin' capes all-a-sudden and was like, "Let's break," so dey take off runnin', and since I don't wanna miss out on any a' dat action, I'm runnin' too! Dis crazy ass whistle starts tweetlin' and shit and a'fore I knew it, we was flyin'! Deez mo'fuckas is all like dippin' up n' down wit' dey capes like parachutes, and pretty soon dey was pointin' at dis castle like dey know what's up, so we all fly down to dat shit ta chill fo' a minute.

Turns out dis be da place we gon' party at! I was trippin' already, but dis cat with the green L hat gave me a mushroom wit' a smiley face on it, tellin' me its supposed ta' make me "grow" n' shit. I'm like, "Yo, I don't need no viagra type shit, aight. I'm all man. Whu-what!" But he told me it ain't like 'dat, so I swallowed it up. Wooooo! Man, dat party was on! Shit had me bouncin' crazy style! Robots, Mega-men, secret agents, mo'fuckas Bustin'-A-Groove, sheeit, even Mike Tyson was dere mackin'!

I started gettin' all dizzy like I was sippin' on some siz-rp so's I went ta chill wit' dis cat wearin' a mushroom hat named Toad. He lemme holla at a potion a' his and I don' know what dat shit was, but I was lit afta dat! Mo'fucka had me rollin'! The music jes' kept me bumpin' all night! Turns out da music bein' played was all on one disc, and had been gettin' press all across deez States in magazines like *Game Informer* and *CMJ's New Music Monthly*. It also turns out dat da disc, VGM Mixtape #8, is available right here, and only here, in the city of Chi, baby! Chicago love! I was trippin' da first time I herd it, and I still trip every time I bump it's 27 tracks of hip-hop, house, electronic dance, noisy glitches, and video game samples. I'm tellin' you, it worked for deez cats Mario and Luigi, and dere's no doubt yo' own party'll get outta hand once deez dancy tracks start spinnin'.

Fo'mo'infoongettin'yo'owncopy, go to [www.nosidesrecords.com](http://www.nosidesrecords.com). Da' release party was Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at buddyY Gallery, 1542 N. Milwaukee, wit' performances by Panicsville, Royal Space Force, and Multi Modal (members of Ghost Arcade). Plus, you could check yo' skillz at da gaming stations and relive classic 'toons like Pac-Man and Dragons Lair. Fo' mo' info on otha' upcōmin' events, call buddyY at 773-342-7332, or da Wizard, 773-442-4578.



REV

CD REVIEW

# Jumpin' Jehoshaphat, This Ain't Your Regular Sacred Music!

by Joe Hertel  
Staff Writer

*You Are My Sunshine* is Cyrus Chestnut's latest musical gift to us, released on Warner Brothers Records. And what a gift it is for all who believe in Jazz. Chestnut has taken several old sacred melodies, plus a few new ones of his own, and delivered us from the stagnant offerings of mass marketing into a joyous celebration of music of the spirit. A total surprise package not intended for mainstream Christianity, but for mainstream music lovers.

Don't let the song titles fool you. You ain't gonna hear music this way in church, unless it's the First Church of Divine Jazz. And I would attend services there if Chestnut was the pianist, just to hear his renditions. This man has command over all 88 keys and has the power to bring both black and white into glorious colorful harmony together. His music is not a religious experience, but rather a spiritual experience, refreshing the soul and body with musical redemption.

He takes a few classic hymns, such as Precious Lord (Thomas A. Dorsey) and Sweet Hour of Prayer (Williams Walford and Bradbury), and arranges them into melodious renditions that will have any jazz enthusiast's hands waving in the air and praising his abilities.

From the light and airy opening of "God has Smiled on Me," to the toe tapping, almost boogie style "You Are My Sunshine," Chestnut provides a musical sermon of feelings from the heart transcribed into beat and measure.

Cyrus mixes the best of both Jazz and Christian music.

It's meant to be enjoyed by listeners of any or no faith, especially if they like Quincy Jones, Dave Brubeck and Ramsey Lewis.

Chestnut studied, at age 9, at the Peabody Institute of Music and later received a degree in jazz composition from the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston. He is joined on this CD by Micheal Hawkins (stand-up bass) and Neal Smith (drums). His background includes playing at his local (Baptist) church where he learned the sacred oldies.

He takes us by the hand and leads us through the upbeat and sensitive offerings until we reach the end, where he leaves us with "Pass Me Not O Gentle Savior" (Fanny Crosby), an emotional soul enriching experience from a man who loves his God and his music.

"Simply close your eyes, open your ears and hearts, and let the peace and joy and harmony permeate your spirit," Chestnut encourages us as we listen to his music. This should be true in everything we do. Can I get a witness? His music deserves a resounding "Amen!"



Photo courtesy of www.hiponline.com

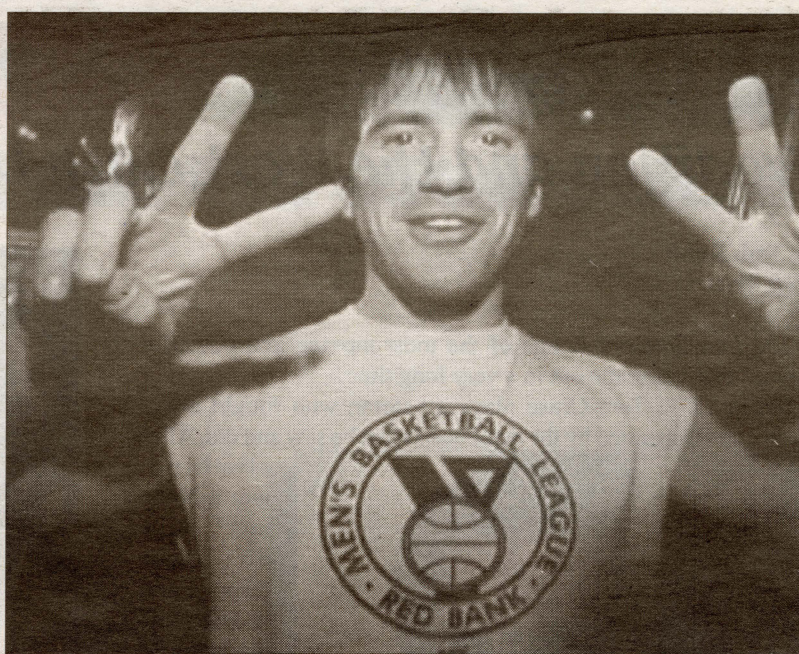


Photo courtesy of www.am1230koy.com

Charity and truth are the ways he tries to pay his dues.

## The Real World found a new helping hand, even if the world doesn't want it

by Dan Demchuk  
Distribution Manager

I was supposed to call MTV's Eric Neis again after I watched his self produced and directed DVD special, *The Road To Reality*. But it would have been just too hard to be so mean over the phone to someone we-the-viewing-public have seen for over a decade on such programs as *The Grind*, and the very first season of *The Real World*. It seems Eric is up to a lot lately, immediately informing me during our initial conversation that he's working with this nonprofit organization called Moment of Hope, "building an international network of students to empower themselves in making community interactions safer." They emphasize strengthening mental, physical, and spiritual awareness to create higher self-esteem and confidence amongst the international community of students. Their first big project is a concert and documentary entitled "Voices of Inspiration," "seen through the eyes of kids who lost parents on 9/11." The project features musicians and kids trying to gain closure through conversations and interviews with the likes of Ziggy Marley, Alicia Keyes, Eric Clapton, P-Diddy, Jigga, and U2's Bono, in anticipation of the April 9th concert in New York.

After hearing all that, I told Eric Neis I wanted the dirt about MTV and his former *Real World* cast members, you know, the juicy stuff. But Eric's a nice guy, telling me, "A lot of people just haven't made good with their past, still wrapped up living a jealous, selfish, angry lifestyle. You just gotta try to support 'em though. Shine some wisdom on them." But his animosity with MTV as an entity wasn't hard to get at. Eric was the former host of MTV's dance-party show, *The Grind*, filming up to 8 episodes a day for over 3 years. MTV apparently took total credit for all the creative input Eric provided for the (then) new show, expanding their market into work-out videos hosted by Neis, then

tried to replace him with another host, or rather hostess, Chicago's own Jenny McCarthy. Due to contractual obligations, Eric had to co-host half that season's shows with Jenny, though McCarthy would complete the rest alone, eventually usurping Neis as the host. Eric explained that the on-air life expectancy of an MTV V-J was merely three to five years, regardless of how influential or innovative you've been. He recalls working on the set of *The Real World/Road Rules Challenge*, admitting, "There was only beer in the fridge on set, because MTV only wants you to drink, fight, and fuck. That's what sells, unfortunately."

With all that chastisement of MTV, its business practices, and its unnerving mantra, I would have expected *The Road To Reality* to be a scathing expose on those policies which Eric Neis demonized in our conversation. I though wrong. Eric Neis and a handful of other former *Real World* and *Road Rules* cast members merely got together to see just how much shit they could get for free, just how much money they could make, by dropping MTV's name and their minor on-air celebrity. They all flew into South Beach in Miami and over the course of 4 days hung around MTV's Spring Break scheduling and promoting parties at various nightclubs to hype the documentary they were filming of their escapades. It was so boring. The 2 hour long DVD was more of a home movie, seemingly unedited in its structure, and contained zero excitement and entertainment. They went to a radio station and talked about being on MTV. They went to nightclubs and told people they were on MTV. They walked around touristy commercial areas of South Beach telling people they were on MTV. They got drunk and talked about being on MTV. I couldn't even watch the whole thing because I was so bored listening to these former MTV cast members complain about MTV, then use their affiliation for benefits like free food and booze, not realizing how hypocritical they all came across. I can't call Eric Neis back to tell him he is a hypocrite! Well, maybe if I do \*67, and then hang up afterward, he won't know it was me. Then I can tell him the DVD sucks too.

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INTERVIEW



# World & Word: The Year According to CNN

by Tom Robb  
Staff Writer

Last week, CNN announced that its word of the year for 2003 was "Embedded". This is a very appropriate word although CNN may not understand that it's a sad statement as to the state of journalism in this country.

Embedding is the process where by journalists ride along with a group, usually the military or the police, to cover the story. The first, and in some ways most dramatic, example of embedding was the TV show *COPS*. On *COPS*, a TV crew would ride along in the squad car, hear and respond to the calls.

The show was seen through the eyes of the police, the camera man ran behind the cops and when the criminal was attacked, you knew it was on the side of the good guys. No cop ever overtly stepped over the line; any violence was justified. That

was the impression that *COPS* could give a viewer. When Embedding is done with beat cops, it does desensitize viewers to violence, but it's basically just entertainment. When the press embeds with the military or police in a civil protest, it becomes a whole other issue.

In Iraq we saw embedding. Many journalists were critical of Desert Storm because they had no access at all, so in this current War in Iraq the military instituted the "Embedded Journalist." The Embed rode in the tank or HUMMER, slept with the troops, rode with them and took fire with them. Taking fire with someone can have an effect on your perspective. The journalist is a target because they are with a military unit, and they see the troops as their only protection. How will a journalist be critical of the men and women to whom they owe their safety and their lives? It is in this context the public gets its information to make decisions on war and peace. The Embed talks to the retired general analyzing the situation on the ground and the statements of the Whitehouse and the Pentagon.

A war zone is a war zone, and a very dangerous place, should journalists be free to roam unescorted. Just look at what happened to Al Jazeera. Their offices got blow up (by accident?) by the U.S. in both Afghanistan and Baghdad, coincidence?

But the Embed process did not stop there. In November 2003, in Miami Florida, there was a conference called the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Many demonstrators from around the country, union people, retired people from Florida, students, activists, indigenous peoples from Central and South America, and yes, even a few anarchists, went to give their opinions. All that was seen on CNN and other big media were helicopter shots of standoffs between riot geared police and



photos courtesy of al Jazeera.net

A romantic silhouette of a soldier defending the U. S.

"Anarchists" through a fog of tear gas.

If you read the Miami Herald, and smaller independent and alternative press, you see a very different picture. Radio station WZRD spoke with a medic with Chicago Action Medical who was there. He spoke of a protester who was shot in the face with plastic bullet at point blank range; he spoke of a pepper spray paint ball being shot into a medical tent where the medics were treating protesters. These stories were not reported by reporters embedded with Miami Police.

In a story ran in the Dec 20th edition of the Miami Herald, a sitting judge in a court in Miami who was at the demonstrations stated, in open court, that he had witnessed at least 20 felonies committed by police.

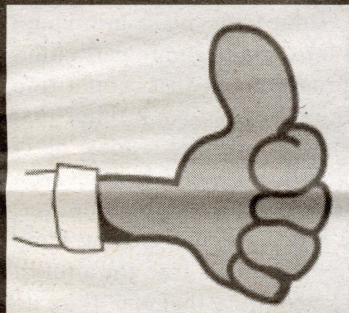
Reports of severe beatings and arrests, including to Journalists from Democracy Now, CBS, CNN and local Miami papers are all over the internet and alternative radio, but not on CNN or the big media. They must be too busy covering Michael Jackson and Scott Peterson.

Yes "Embedded" is the word of the year, and it is a sad day for truth.



Police attack protestors, citizens at point blank range in Miami, FL

## Thumbs Up? Thumbs down!



Apparently, Bush wants to send people to Mars

Britney got married to an old friend

Jack Kearney is no longer in control of our property

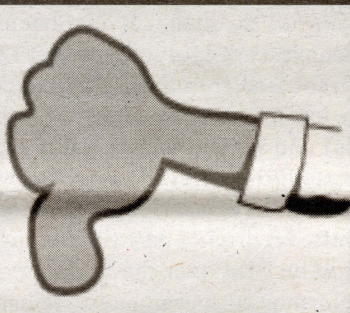
NEIU has a long history of stable labor relations

The terror alert is down to Orange

Mad Cow disease has left cafeteria unscathed

Blaskowzki finally graduated

Rohloff was assigned a story!



Think Mars has any jobs they don't need?

The first of many annulments and divorces

Now his department has no one to bitch at

A lot of good that'll do us this year

It'll go back up if Bush loses another game of *Grand Theft Auto* to an adviser

They're still offering that god-forsaken salmonella bar

No one to quietly loathe on campus

He let someone else write it!

## ADVISORY: Contains Strong Language

by Joe Hertel  
Staff Writer

Most readers of this paper are too young to remember Lenny Bruce, or the 1960's, in which he played a major role in our perception of what is truly obscene. I remember Bruce, and, although much of the sixties is a foggy blur to me (I won't say why), when an article appeared this last week of December about his posthumous pardon by the governor of New York, I thought it worth mentioning.

In 1964, Lenny Bruce, a stand-up comic, was arrested, charged, and later convicted, for an "obscene" performance. This was due to his prolific use of words that were not allowed to be uttered in public. While it is true that certain words are still being "bleeped" by the FCC, it is nothing compared to then. Bruce, considered a pioneer in transforming stand up comedy, which up to then was mostly joke telling, went for the jugular of society's hypocrisy and upset the powers that be. He died in 1966, an outcast, of a drug overdose. Bruce opened the door for comics like Richard Pryor, George Carlin (famous for his "Seven words you can't say" monologue), Robin Williams, Andrew Dice Clay (shudder), and a host of others.

Words, in themselves, are not obscene. Vulgar, yes. We still call them "swear" words, but they have entered into mainstream society and are used to pepper our language quite often as evidenced when you walk through NEIU's food court and listen to table conversations. I'm not shittin' you, we could not talk like that 40 years ago. And what was the big deal? I don't know.

Everyone then, and now, knew the words. Kids learn them early on, don't they? Although they can still be offensive to many people (we call them sensitive viewers), they have lost the impact they had 40 years ago because of over-use. I saw a student last summer on campus wearing a T-shirt that blatantly said: "Fuck You!" In the 60's, he not only would have been tossed out of classes, but probably arrested for obscenity. Now, he is just being vulgar, and if reprimanded, would run to the ACLU about his freedom of speech being violated. Good or bad? Where do you draw the line, and should you draw a line?

In my Playwrighting and Intro to Theater classes, script dialogues contained the "F" word as well as others. In a play put on for middle school kids, the dialogue was gratuitously laced with "effin' this and effin' that," and we all know what that referred to. In Film class, we heard vulgar language and saw naked bodies on the screen. To me, it's no big deal.

Perhaps polite society thought by making these words unmentionable, they would somehow make for a purer environment. Bullshit! I remember Louie, a 10 year old kid on the block who had a repertoire of cuss words that would make a sailor blush. Neighborhood parents went to his father and complained, and the old man had to change his vocabulary. Today, the old man would have kicked your ass down the street for confronting him.

We have become desensitized over the past 40 years. Younger folks don't see the change as well as us old farts. Cuss words are the least of the process. Increased display of blood and guts violence in games and movies, and true obscenities like war, rape, murder, domestic violence, racism, gay-bashing, and even cannibalism have permeated society to the point that when confronted with a swear word, most respond as Clark Gable did in *Gone With the Wind*, uttering the screen's first bad word, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn."

How do I protect my kids from hearing these things? I don't. I just explain there are times and places where certain things, including choice of words, are inappropriate. Television, the biggest culprit, has brought these words into our living rooms. We hear them on MTV and even presidential candidates utter them at press conferences. TV sit-coms and comedy jams are vulgar and laced with suggestive dialogue, double meanings, and bodily movements.

My opinion is that the FCC should hang it up and stop their bleeping bleeping. Right now, they are debating the use of an expletive used as a descriptive adjective. So I can't say the word if it pertains to the explicit act of intercourse, but I can use it descriptively if it's fucking meaning is altered?

Let's concern ourselves with the far more serious problems that confront us. Like censorship. By the way, this will be the last article I write with cuss words in it (that's if my pussy editors had the balls to leave them in the text). You see, I don't need vulgarity to make my point.



photo courtesy of yahoo.com

Lenny Bruce, the poster boy for obscenity



# Straight Eye for the Queer Guy

by Joe Hertel  
Staff Writer

I confess to reading *Savage Love*, a column appearing in *The Reader* newspaper. I find it enlightening, honest, and repulsive at times (especially the sanctorum articles).

Savage has some very good insight into lifestyles of the "bitch and femmish," and he can also say things, as a gay, that would otherwise label me a homophobe.

His column is honest and direct. It is unfortunate that I cannot speak as forthrightly about my views as him, without perhaps incurring the wrath of our GLBA, but here goes...

My concerns in this matter are two: the over-reaction and phobic-like response of the GLBA to opposing views; and a limited understanding as to the issues within the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community from the rest of us.

Because I, and others, do not endorse the gay lifestyle, doesn't mean that we do not support them. I accept everyone on an equal basis as an individual, and I believe we all have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The GLBA has to understand that they will never persuade certain segments of the student/faculty to endorse, much less approve, their lifestyle.

The enactment of rules on campus further limiting speech and activities merely forces the true homophobes underground, where they can do far more damage than if we allowed them into the light to be exposed for what they truly are: ignorant and afraid.

I have had, and still do,

homosexual friends, and have never felt compromised or pressured by them in any way. I had a lesbian girlfriend (yes, girlfriend) for three years until she left me for another woman. She still rates high on my list of wonderful women I have known and loved.

My childhood friend, Al (we were in grade and high school together), served in Viet Nam, as did I, and I would have trusted him with my life. His being gay was not an issue to those who knew him (he died of AIDS a few years ago). I do not feel threatened by the GLBA.

My only concern is the sexual pervers, homo and hetero, that cannot control themselves and their behavior. Perversion exists in both camps, but that is not what we are discussing here.

It was unfortunate that the GLBA and some of it's supporters resorted to throwing condoms and voicing seething shout-downs while H.O.M.E. was on campus.

Even I was accused of being a homophobe because some lesbians thought I was one of the "old men" at the table, whereas I actually was engaged in quiet debate with the two representatives (I won't deduct points for that mis-labeling, ladies, but urge caution in the future).

Overreacting did not help the GLBA in it's quest for acceptance and understanding. In fact, it only exposed their insecurity and lack of faith in a student body that, in my opinion, would rally to their support in the event of true hate-speech/crimes.

I do agree with the GLBA that the administration has to respond with more than rhetoric in such cases.

I do not judge persons on the basis of their sexual preference. I believe love and sex are wonderful, and wish I had more of both in my life.

No one has a right to deny people a chance at happiness, and although I would not choose the Gay path, I have no right to interfere with someone else's choice, and neither does the State.

All students have the right to attend NEIU without fear of harassment or prejudice. Open, honest dialogue and communication are essential to understanding.

If the GLBA is going to overreact and classify all opposing views as hate speech, and not allow freedom of expression for others, then they are just as guilty of being phobic as those they condemn. This, in my opinion, damages their credibility.

For those who incorrectly interpret the Bible, God did not destroy Sodom simply because of homosexuality (there were plenty of towns that should have been included had it been the case!).

He destroyed Sodom because of wickedness. Get it straight (pardon the pun): wickedness! Sodom was, beyond redemption, people were of evil hearts and minds, totally corrupt and depraved.

What am I saying? We are not going to hell because we are gay or straight, we are going to hell because we are wicked. God, if you believe in Him, searches the heart. And, I think this was inscribed on a temple in ancient Greece: "Know thyself."

If you hate someone because they are different than you, then you have an eternally big problem.

This, my fellow students, applies to everyone.

# The Executioner's Song

by J. Louis Bracich  
Business Manager

"I just can't do it, I can't afford it, John," my father said to me. Five or eight minutes ago my parents were having another argument about health insurance. Sitting at the kitchen table, I heard them go on and on about this. See, my mother works at McDonalds, she's almost 60 years old, and to the insurance industry, that is practically a crime. She had been looking for over ten years for a decent job, but here in Niles, finding a job is harder than finding the Holy Grail. And it isn't just here in some dank suburb in the shadow of Chicago, but all over. It's a twisted paradox, one can find a job, but insurance coverage is horrible, or you find a job that pays at least 10-12 an hour but might be stuck with COBRA.

This whole situation makes me angry. My father, a leftist recluse from the 1940s, blames the president. Thank god, he's 78, so he and I (I am disabled) have been on Medicare for a while; we also have a small hospitalization insurance, but that runs about 200 for both of us. We need it because frankly, Medicare doesn't cover all the costs. Have you seen what both a public and a private hospital charge just for aspirin? Having north of 20 surgeries in my lifetime, I can safely say that hospitals will charge outrageous prices on the littlest things (\$90 for two Tylenol pills, \$40 for a roll of bandages). When you go into a hospital, I beg you, look at your bill if you have to pay for it. Insurance, in my opinion, has become more valuable than even a salary. One can make over a hundred grand a year, but woe that person would be if he or she falls ill and needs that much to cover for medical needs.

Walking past the halls of this school, stuff like this passes my mind. Dumb, I know, but you have no idea how important this is. So many of my friends, some who have graduated from this school, still cannot find jobs. On friend in particular, graduated from NEIU's finance program and still cannot find a job in the finance field (something beyond bank teller that is) and he had nearly a 4.0 grade point average. Today, he is struggling, nearly 2 years since graduating, and has been on COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconsolidation Act) leftover from a part time security guard gig and account temp job he held over the Summer. I'm sure this is true for a lot of Northeastern graduates. He has a back injury that may flare up in the future.

The news says that we have close to 40 million uninsured or underinsured. I'm sorry, but if you can't get everything covered, you have no insurance. What is the solution? A lot of people keep talking about Canada, or the UK's health plan. In these places, the government pays for your insurance and coverage is supposedly universal. I have family in both countries, let me tell you right now, what the government pays you pay back in taxes. You wait and wait and wait, especially in Canada. The situation has gotten to the point where the doctors there simply decide if it is cheaper to just give the person pain medication to ease their suffering. Every hospital in Canada is basically Cook County, and we all know how that place is. There has to be something better. Some sort of hybrid of the two?

Yesterday, we had an insurance salesperson come over, a nice Jewish guy, well he was a "nice Jewish guy" until he gave my dad the quotes for insurance. Now I don't know what the national average is for insurance coverage, but I'm gonna tell you what we were quoted. Out of the 5 or so reps that have come by, we were told anywhere from \$390 a month to \$800 a month. This scares me, because my uncle Tomas, who had immigrated here from Mexico, had no insurance and later would slowly be eaten alive from AIDS. AIDS and cancer have taken a big toll on our family; mainly the latter is prevalent in our family. My mother's sister had contracted ovarian cancer many years ago, and neither preventative medicine nor procedures were covered in her plan. By the time I was 12, I had been to more funerals, victims of cancer or other illnesses mainly, than I had been to birthday parties. The majority of these deaths were illnesses that could have been prevented.

This was supposed to be an opinion article were I had to take a side or offer up a possible solution. Sadly, I have no answers, for you or my mother. Instead, I offer this to you the reader, as a testimonial to the health care crises that is affecting so many, including many NEIU students. My mother is now sitting in her favorite chair, staring out the window, her left arm arched with her hand covering part of her face. I can see that she is crying. My father loves my mom dearly, but given the situation, she's even considered divorce to avoid financial oblivion should she get sick. My mother's sister had contracted her cancer at the age my mother is now. My mother looks up at the clock, wiping her tears she looks back at the snow falling, perhaps wondering if another type of clock is ticking for her now.

# There's a lot of Bush in Dean

by Patrick O'Brien  
Production Manager

Howard Dean is no left-wing candidate, and it may be too late for him to be removed in time for a true anti-Bush to be nominated to run against George W. this year.

Howard Dean had his record as Governor of Vermont sealed, and his views seem to be sliding farther and farther to the right. He has distanced himself from his approval of gay civil unions as governor, and he chooses to emphasize his credentials as a medical doctor.

This strategy seeks to entice moderates and the Reagan Democrat demographic, rather than promote someone who once worked in close council with abortion doctors at Planned Parenthood, like Dean has.

Dean is a political realist, and he realizes the hold that conservatism and fear has on this country. Any program or idea that doesn't mention Homeland Security or the ubiquitous war on terrorism has little chance of winning widespread approval from voters more concerned with what goes on outside the States than our crumbling economy within.

The unemployment rate dropped slightly last month, only because 300,000 people stopped looking for jobs.

The Labor Department released figures showing several economic factors slipping or not growing as expected. Fewer jobs are being created, and employers are



Howard Dean on the trail

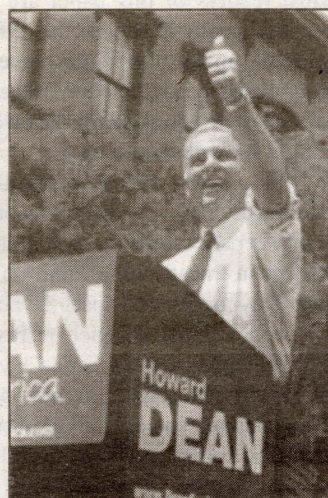
shortening the average workweek and hiring more part time workers.

Amid this backdrop of fear of the sky falling, the President announced plans for a manned trip to Mars. Like Dean, Bush can't see the forest for the trees, or the economy that looks no better than it did a year ago.

Never mind the Iraqi war, the one Dean was opposed to wholeheartedly before he became a candidate for the Democratic nomination. Now Dean has began the process of showing middle America he's not your typical Democrat. He has to prove he's tough on terrorism, crime, and a hyper-patriot who won't jeopardize national security for social programs.

The sealing of state records until 2013 by Dean is the kind of thing the Bush/Cheney/Rove Axis of Evil would do to cover up their penchant for giving White House access to the CEO's who influence their energy, defense and economic policies.

Dean is no Bush, he isn't even close; what Dean is an opportunist, and he must realize he is the best of a very weak field of candidates. It



photos by deanforamerica.org

would make some hope for Hillary.

But Dean can't seem to be his own man (or woman); he constantly tries to hold onto the center, ignoring the left wing of his party. He is almost indistinguishable from Bush in his campaign style, and he is no more dynamic than Al Gore.

And when we go to vote this November, they won't vote for a flimsy, transparent version of Republican scare tactics, they'll vote for the real thing. No Democrat should want a candidate who won't take a stand on abortion, like Dean.

Or one who won't stand by his record. Even Bill Clinton, the worst President this side of Nixon, at least refused to seal his records as Bush Sr. assailed him in 1992.

So don't ask me who to vote for in this year's race, because I can't tell the phantom candidate from the real asshole.

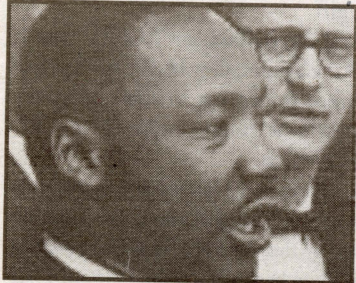
Dont let the winter  
get you in pieces.  
Join the Independent!





# Eagle's Nest

Lifestyles of the Northeastern community



by Patrick O'Brien  
Production Manager

Next week marks the official observance of the day we call Martin Luther King Day, where Americans take a day to remember the man born in obscurity, in Atlanta in 1929, a man martyred in the name of civil rights, economic freedom and equality on a Memphis motel balcony in 1968.

A look at the life of King and the message he gave his life for, a world where justice reigned supreme.

## In Training

Though he was often lambasted in the American press for being ignorant of issues and oversimplifying blacks' crusade for equal treatment, King was being criticized by white Americans and members of the press who had far less education and formal training than King himself.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. possessed three college degrees; he graduated from Morehouse College at the age of 19 with a degree in Sociology, and then followed that with a B.D. from Crozer Theological Seminary in 1951. He later achieved a doctorate in systematic theology in 1955 after studying at Boston University.

King rose to national prominence in 1955 amid the Montgomery Bus Boycott, following Rosa Parks refusal to adhere to southern race code and offer her seat to a white man. His house was subsequently

## Return of a King

Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy serve as an oasis of hope in troubled times

bombed a year later, and like most black leaders, he was harassed by local police and sheriffs throughout his career.

In 1957, King became President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and that year traveled approximately 780,000 miles and gave 208 speeches in support of the burgeoning movement for black equality.

### Telling tales from pickets & jail

1958 saw King stabbed in Harlem while he promoted his first book, *Stride Toward Freedom*, by an African-American woman. The following year King visited India and praised Mohandas Gandhi's nonviolent resistance techniques for making his success in the civil rights protests possible.

King soon became pastor of his father's Ebenezer Baptist Church in 1960 in his hometown. King tailored his speeches and his writing to his steadfast Christian faith, never wavering from his love for God and his fellow man.

This love led King to be arrested and attacked many times over the next several years, with his *Letter From Birmingham Jail* becoming a staple of civil rights literature in 1963 following one of his arrests.

### Taking advantage of hope

This was the same year as his famed "I Have A Dream" speech, delivered in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial in front of 250,000 supporters during the March on Washington. This is

the speech used by conservatives and liberals alike today to attack affirmative action, using King's own words to undermine a program he would have supported were he alive.

Many white and black politicians have co-opted King's legacy in the years since his death, as a proof of their sincerity on the "race question." King's true voice is more difficult to copy than the words he spoke though.

### Why he couldn't wait

What goes unnoticed and unreported about King is the last three years of his career, and indeed his life. King in time turned away from his original more conciliatory message toward the U.S. government and white Americans, and became more pessimistic and less willing to wait for progress.

His campaigns in Chicago and Cleveland for blacks enlightened King to the complexities of Northern racism and difficulties he faced in making economic independence a reality for blacks in the 60's.

Though some gains were made through Operation Breadbasket in securing contracts and black business gains, King was faced with the knowledge that "a revolution of values" was necessary to make true the promises of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

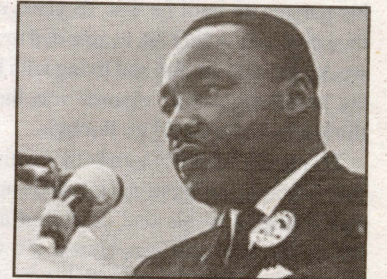
### War against the poor

Post-1965, as the civil rights struggle was waning and Vietnam took hold of the imagination of America. King spoke out the evils he saw there and was denounced as a demagogue and a bumpkin who knew nothing about foreign affairs.

These are rather bold statements about a man who foreshadowed American opinion on the war, a war that proved to be the least popular in American history. King's voice was a courageous one before many Americans black or white were aware of the horrors of Vietnam. King identified the war as a syphon of money that could have helped the destitute in America.

### Bringing King to 2004

Discussion of the later King is non-existent, as he provides great fodder for those who want to point to his exceptional early successes and tell young blacks today to "pull themselves up by the bootstraps." If they had listened as Martin Luther King evolved from civil rights



leader to world leader, they would know it takes more than strong words to improve your condition.

Even after his death, the issue of a day to commemorate his life has always caused controversy, even now. New Hampshire waited until 1998 to declare the day a state holiday, and Greenville County in South Carolina recently voted against having the day as a state holiday, though the same county board did vote for five other state holidays to be enacted.

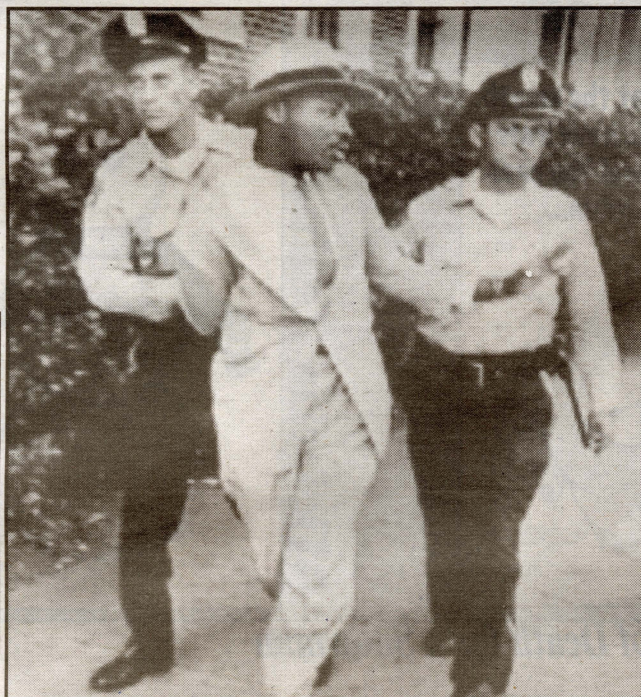
Yet despite too many attempts to disgrace his gifts to every American, and every human being, King's flaws only bring out his greatness all the more.

Attempts by the likes of J. Edgar Hoover to use King's human weaknesses against him cannot tarnish what the good King did. Our heroes needn't be perfect to be worthy of our praise.

King at his peak held the nation's collective soul in his hands, and still there are those who would ignore a day fit for a King.



Photos from Martin Luther King Jr.'s brilliant career: Clockwise from left: King delivers a sermon in Atlanta. A rare encounter with his contemporary Malcolm X. King delivers a fiery speech. King addressing 250,000 protestors in the March on Washington, just before delivering his famous "I Have A Dream" speech that afternoon. King being arrested outside a courthouse early in his career.



photos courtesy of imahero.com, freestockphotos.com, fadedgiant.com and Library of Congress





ANDREA ZELINSKI

# Stan's Life



STAN WOJCIECHOWSKI

## A life of his own

He had grown up in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, and grown up comfortably, with both his parents up until he was 16 years old when they divorced. After that, he resorted to spending weekends with his dad and living with his mom. He had thought their divorce was the hardest thing a teenager could go through.

Living day after day torn between his parents' fights, hearing his mom call his father an asshole, and listening to his dad complain about her taking the house; it was almost too much for him to take. He still lives with his mom though, and lives with their divorce every day.

It wasn't until he started attending Northeastern that he started to realize that people should have such problems.

"Stan, what's up?" asked Elliott as he walked towards him in the Student Union. "How are your classes?"

"Eh, they're alright. I'm taking a couple 300 level courses this semester, so it's a little heavy. What about yours?"

"Okay. I'm taking a Film and Video course that should be fun, but other than that, I've got a couple serious classes," he said as a guy about their age approached them. "Hey! What's up! How you doin' man? I haven't see you in months!" he exclaimed and then realized Stan was still there. "Hey Stan, there's someone I'd like you to meet. Stan, this is Corey. Corey, Stan."

Corey smiled as they shook hands. "Nice to meet you," he said politely then turned to Elliott. "Wanna grab a bite to eat?"

"Sure. Stan, wanna come with?"

He shrugged. Why not?

They sat in the 24-Hour café on Bryn Mawr and Kimball ordering cheeseburgers and french fries. Shortly after ordering the food, Elliott checked his watch. "Oh shit. Sorry guys, I've got to run. My class starts in 10 minutes and I heard the prof actually enforces the attendance the waitress to cancel my cheeseburger," he said as he dashed out of the restaurant.

Stan sighed awkwardly as he looked up at the stranger in front of him. He was a husky white guy, rather thick, but not big. He sat there stirring his coffee, garbed in clothes that looked to be

from the thrift store. "So, where are you from?" Corey asked.

"Northwest suburbs. I'm a hop, skip, and a jump away from O'Hare. You?"

"The city. Lived in the city my whole life," he gave a half smile, "I almost can't imagine not living there."

"That's cool. You live with your parents?"

Corey shook his head. "I was living with my mom, brothers and sisters for a while, but now I live with my sister."

"That's cool. What about your dad?"

"No. I never met my dad; he ran off before I was born."

"Oh. Uh, how old are your brothers and sisters?"

"25, 24, 23, 21, and 14."

"Wow." Stan replied puzzled. "And how old are you?"

"22. I'm the fourth child." Corey answered.

"So your mom got remarried after you were born and had the last two kids?"

Corey smirked. He could tell Stan wasn't trying to pry, but was actually ignorant on how some non-middle class kids grow up. Many people from the suburbs can't comprehend a life outside the protected ones they lead with a two-car garage, so he decided to indulge him.

"No, my mom never married until only a couple years ago. She wasn't married when she had any of us."

"Oh. But she was with the same guy for a while though." Stan assumed.

"Nope. None of us have the same dad."

"Huh? None?!"

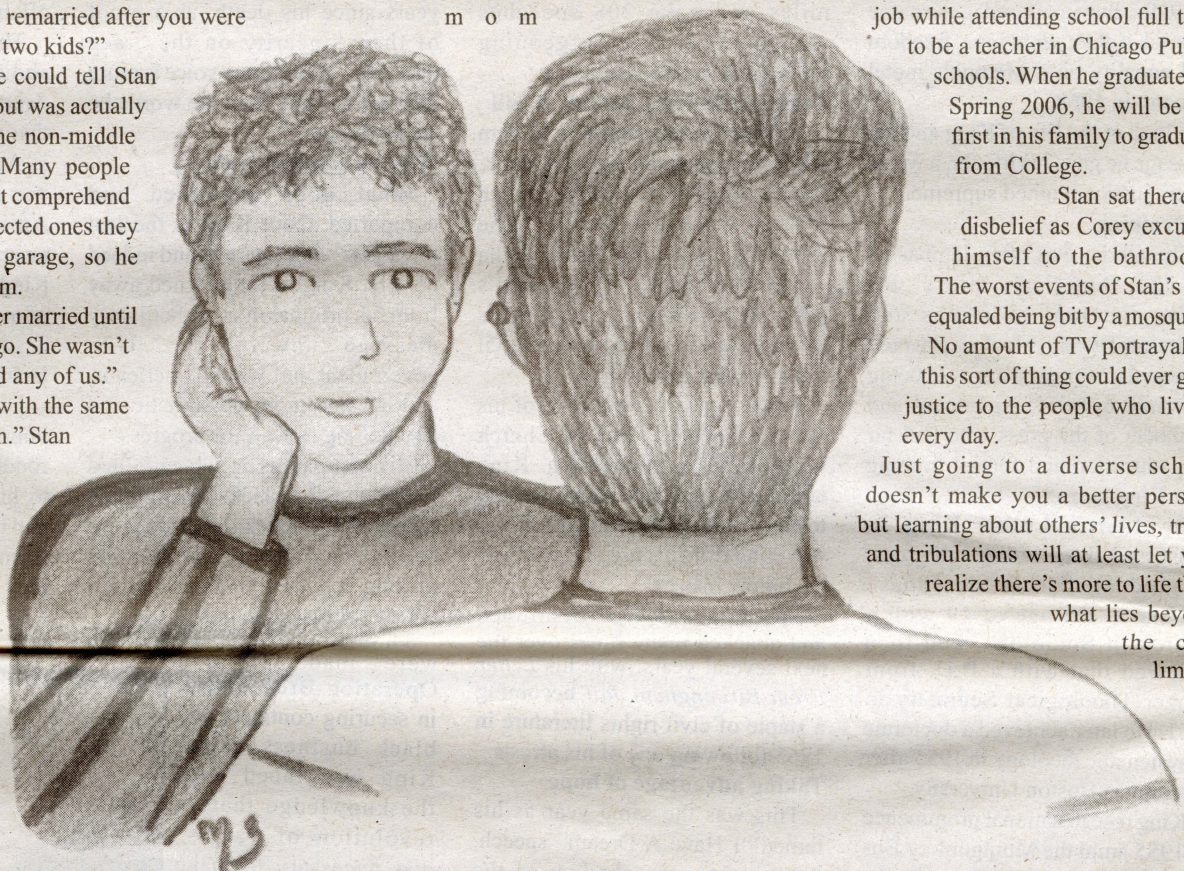
Corey shook his head. He proceeded his life growing up. Stan sat entranced, drinking his coke as Corey continued. He told Stan how none of them knew

their fathers, and they were all born year after year for 5 consecutive years. His mom started having kids when she was sixteen and didn't stop until her last child at 27.

The youngest of them was born three months early and could fit in the palm of your hands. He was retarded, with countless complications that never really improved. Corey and his siblings took care of their baby brother until he was almost ten years old, which was when they realized they didn't have the medical resources to take care of him any more. "Every year, the doctors say this will be his last year, his last birthday, his last Christmas, and every year he proves them wrong."

Corey and his siblings had next to nothing, materially, growing up. No cable, no car, no games. They eventually had an 8 bit Nintendo that lasted 17 years, and that was the only video game station they ever had. Their

m o m



bought it as a gift for all of her kids one Christmas because she couldn't afford to buy each one a gift.

They lived on welfare until Corey was 12 years old. At one point, they had so little money that they were forced out of their apartment and lived on the street until a priest at a nearby church took them in.

They've lived in 13 different apartments, sometimes in rough neighborhoods. Sometimes they've lived on the same blocks as drug dealers, but none of them has ever touched the stuff. His older brother had been shot at in high school, and his mom had a gun put to her head.

But his family made due. They've been there for each other through the darkest points in their lives. His mom started making better money, but not enough to support her 5 kids.

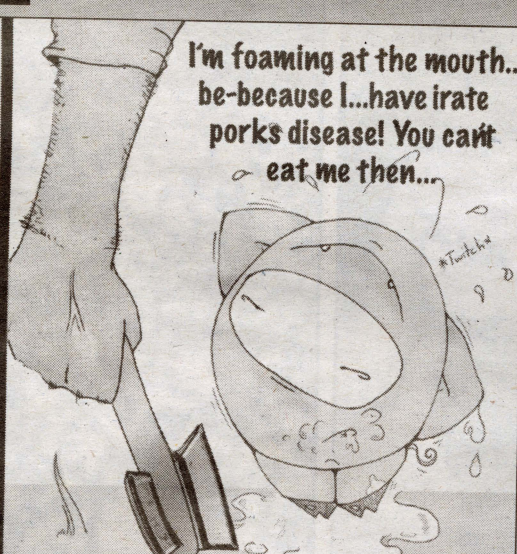
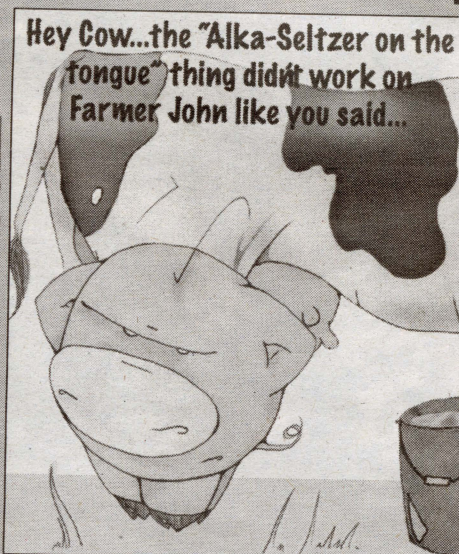
Corey has been working since he was 16 years old, and currently works a full time job while attending school full time to be a teacher in Chicago Public schools. When he graduates in Spring 2006, he will be the first in his family to graduate from College.

Stan sat there in disbelief as Corey excused himself to the bathroom. The worst events of Stan's life equaled being bit by a mosquito. No amount of TV portrayal on this sort of thing could ever give justice to the people who live it every day.

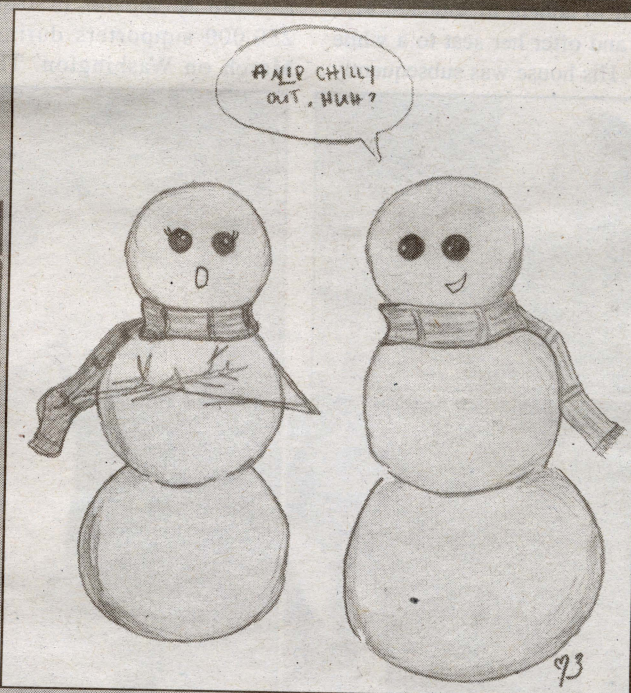
Just going to a diverse school doesn't make you a better person; but learning about others' lives, trials and tribulations will at least let you realize there's more to life than what lies beyond the city limits.

## the side splitters

Cecilia Carboni



Michelle Zelinski



Side Splitters  
not cutting it  
for ya?  
How about you  
give it a shot?

Michelle Zelinski

### Choices of Death for a Snowman





# Don't fear! Student support is here

A student's guide to making the new semester a successful one

by **Dave DeSmedt**  
Senior Staff Writer

Once again another semester springs upon us, but spring is still far away. The excitement from the holidays has worn off. What about those New Year's Resolutions? Are they still in effect? If not, then here's your second chance.

The university offers many programs and services to help students maintain a balance in their lives. Whether you are striving for new goals or maintaining success, this reminder will make the required dedication fit more regularly into your schedule.

Most students appear to have problems with stability among academic, physical, and emotional needs. Time management also appears to be a weak spot for some. No one can do it all, especially at once, so take some time aside and plan accordingly. It is also important to remain both optimistic and honest. The optimism will help one to be positive and forthright. The honesty prevents the establishment of unrealistic goals.

Beginning with the academic issues, there is an array of services provided for support. Let's start with the three R's. The Writing Lab provides help for students struggling with papers. Even if you feel that you're a sufficient writer, the Writing Lab will provide you with further insight and guidance. Good writers also face difficulties such as writing blocks and burnout. The Writing Lab is located on the second floor of the Classroom Building (**CLS 2046**). Students are best served with an appointment, so please call **442-5480** for further information.

The Ronald Williams Library is home to the Tutorial Center, the Reading Lab, and the Math Lab. All of these services are located on the fourth floor. The Tutorial Center will help students identify problem areas and assist them with solutions. They may be reached at **442-4567**. The Reading Lab helps students by improving reading skills. Reading is not only crucial to college life, but is a lifetime skill. Better reading skills lead to better time management because more material is covered in less time. The Reading Lab may be reached at **442-4568**.

The word "math" is enough to make the skin of many students crawl. No more cold sweats or panic attacks! Just call **442-5771** for help. For students enrolled in a foreign language, the university has a Foreign Languages Lab located in Building A (**A-133**). There is support and further materials for enhancement and reinforcement of the foreign language experience. They may be reached at **442-4752**.

Physical and mental/emotional needs tend to be ignored in the hustle and bustle of academic and work commitments. These forgotten aspects are more essential to a proper balance than most people realize. Exercise has many health benefits, especially stress removal, which is a critical factor for many students. The staff at the Physical Education Building offers many programs for those wishing to either start or continue physical fitness programs. Call **442-5560** for further information.

The Counseling Office on campus can provide the confidential and professional help needed to survive on a mental and emotional level. If the blues have got you down or if you need a caring someone to listen and help sort through life issues, call **442-4650** or visit them in Building D (**D-024**), just below the Cashier's Office.

As the reality of the semester surrounds you, remember that proper planning and time management are crucial to success. Goals are not unattainable, support is everywhere. Make Northeastern Illinois not only your school, but part of your support network as well.

# Just resolve to do better

Making resolutions is easy, keeping them a whole other thing

**Staci Sonenthal**  
Office Assistant

The New Year has always been a time for looking back at the previous year, and reflecting on what was good and what was bad. Hopefully, there were more good things than bad. But it is also a time to think about what one wants to change or improve on in the future.

With the start of the New Year comes new resolutions, and while we always make them with the full intention of seeing them through, it doesn't mean it always happens that way.

Historically speaking, resolutions are reflections of the Babylonian's belief that what a person does on the first day the New Year will affect the entire year. Some cultures still hold that whatever you do on New Year's Day will be what you end up doing with the rest of that year, be it sleep on the couch or run a mile.

Whether we choose to believe that or not is completely up to us. But that's where the resolutions come into play. By making them, we actively decide to change our future in the coming year.

Most of us don't have any clue on how to keep our resolutions, and then we wonder why or how we failed to complete them. So we either stop making goals, or we make them so ridiculously easy to handle that they become almost meaningless. While this may serve to keep us from the frustration of failure, or get us a quick self esteem boost, it does little in the long run.

Now, how do we keep our resolutions one may ask. Here are some ideas to think about. First of all, don't set the bar so high, as the saying goes. Resolutions, despite their good intentions, must be possible for us to hold to. So while world peace would be out of any one person's league, peaceful relationships with the people we interact with could work for any of us.

Also, don't try to tackle all of the resolutions at once. That will only cause stress, failure, and most of all, the regret of ever making the resolutions in the first place.

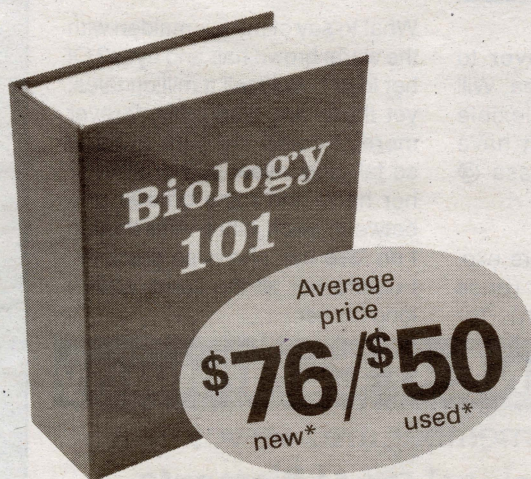
Make a good plan that will help you carry out your goal. This way everything is more structured and a less chance of failure. Also writing down the goal will help, leaving little room for cheating, and making it easier to remember.

Many times, either from experience or watching too many of those Bally's total fitness commercials, people will tend to make their goal to lose weight. It's probably the most classic and most widely vowed resolution. This goal is also extremely hard to keep, mainly because the results are not there as fast as we want them.

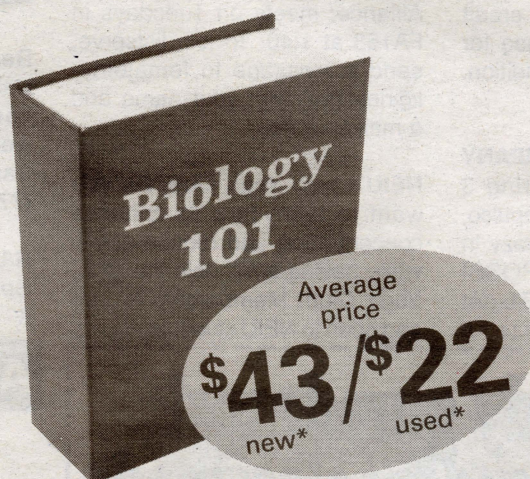
Even if you want to lose 50 pounds by November, you won't lose anything if you try to get rid of all 50 pounds from Day One. Try instead to lose about 2-5 pounds a month, and go from there.

The main thing to remember is not to stress over a resolution. Find something more meaningful and enjoyable. If something is more appealing, it will make the goal easier to carry out. Everyone has their own views on resolutions and whether they will continue to make them from year to year. The most helpful thing you can do to try and improve your chances of succeeding is to make them interesting and fun.

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**Hip Hop is Art. It's everything** around us consisting of vision, vocals, music, rhythm, B-Boys, Dj's, emcees.... Your opinions! Your Input! Join the Hip Hop Organization every Thursday 1:40-2:40 p.m. in room FA-247.

**WZRD 88.3 FM's "Thursday Nite Live:** seeks bands/musicians All styles considered. No promises. Must have demo. Send band style descriptions and biography to [dmpeccoraro@hotmail.com](mailto:dmpeccoraro@hotmail.com).

**The Muslim Student Association** meets on Thursday FA 107 and Friday Prayer is held in SU 214 at 1:15.

**Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance:** meets on Tuesdays in FA153 at 1:40. To join listserve, send a message to [femajorityl@neu.edu](mailto:femajorityl@neu.edu) with your name and e-mail address.

**NEIU's new Yoga club. Do you** want to learn how to enhance concentration and reduce stress while having fun?! Join the BMC Yoga Club! Membership is free and open to NEIU students, faculty

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**Care about your environment?** Let's start a NEIU environmental organization! Contact or leave message for Sara (773) 561-5131 or [revo1@chickmail.com](mailto:revo1@chickmail.com).

**Service Opportunities await YOU!** Check out student Volunteer Corps! Call 773-442-4618 or stop in A-125 to find out more.

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**Sustainable Land Use** Group (SLUG), a NEIU environmental group, fostering environmental sensibility. For more information, email SLUG at [neu\\_SLUG@yahoo.com](mailto:neu_SLUG@yahoo.com).

**FUTURE TEACHERS CLUB:** Education majors wanted! Meetings held Mondays and Thursdays. See bulletin board near CLS 3010 or E-Mail [ftcneu@hotmail.com](mailto:ftcneu@hotmail.com)

## Wanted

**Responsible animal lover** to walk dogs in lake-front area. Will need someone with a flexible weekday schedule. Must have transportation. Call Melissa @ (773)510 - 6607.

**R/L guitarist/writer**, 30 yrs exp. Seeks rhythm section (bass & drums or percussion), for

once/wk development of original material. Age not a consideration, but strong rhythmic sensibility and improvisational spirit are. [bonzadog@hotmail.com](mailto:bonzadog@hotmail.com).

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## Personal

One newspaper to rule them all, One newspaper to find them, One paper to bring them all and in the darkness bind them...  
-- Dunko "Frodo Lives" McFunko

What to say of my fair maiden with the warm brown hair and eyes? Of her love I could tell a million tales, yet those are mine only, forever more. I could imagine nothing so fair and sweet as her kiss, or her hand and mine betwixt and between each other. And though I do love her, she is so precious, I revere her all the same while I long for her.

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