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Issue 6

Kidnapping as Military Strategy?

KEAN WITZEMAN
staff writer



Kean is a Political Science major

In times of war, nations often engage in practices that they would normally never adhere to during times of peace. As the war in Iraq trudges on slowly and violently, the United States is no exception. The US military and government have both received some negative attention lately, on both the war front and the home front, pertaining to actions taken while fighting worldwide terror.

Documents released during the end of January report a new military tactic in the War on Terror that might shock many Americans and anger many Muslims in the Middle East. The documents, released to the Associated Press via a Freedom of Information Act request, detail accounts of the American Army using the wives of suspected enemies as leverage for their capture. On at least two occasions, women were seized and taken to US detention centers, while a note was tacked on the door telling the Iraqi to, "Come get his wife." One such document, filed by a United States intelligence officer, describes the raid and capture of a 28-year-old woman nursing her 6-month-old child. In both reported incidents, the United States military claimed that the women taken into custody were viewed as threats. Both women were released within a matter of days with no charges filed against either.

The practice has been adamantly denounced by human rights agencies as an unacceptable breach of ethics and the Geneva Convention. Said Jumana

Mausa of Amnesty International, "You cannot detain people for no purpose other than to get to somebody else. It just simply doesn't square with the law." Despite the negative press,

military analysts, such as ABC's Tony Cordesman, state that kidnapping insurgents' wives does not violate the rules of war, and is necessary when combating a non-conventional enemy. The contention, however, lies in the necessity for the capture of the right women. If the military begins taking women from families that are not involved, then the tactic will surely hurt the intentions of the military and will hinder the democratic process in Iraq.

On the home front, the United States government has also, arguably, been overstepping its boundaries. Laura Berg, a Veterans Affairs nurse with 15 years experience working in Albuquerque, New Mexico was recently accused of sedition for writing a letter critical of President Bush. Berg was investigated by the FBI and her office computer at the V.A. was seized. Berg's letter, written to The Albini, a local newspaper, stated, "as a V.A. nurse working with re-



turning...vets, I know the public has no sense of the additional devastating human and financial costs of

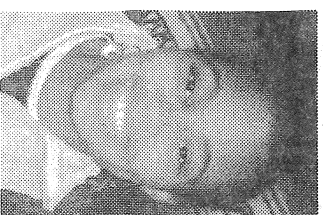
the consequences of war often reach farther than we anticipate.

post-traumatic stress disorder." She also added the hope that people would, "act forcefully to remove a government administration playing games of smoke and mirrors and vicious deceit." In a recent interview on Democracy Now!, Berg says that the letter was passed up through the ranks of the V.A., and she described her encounter with FBI officials, recalling, "Oh, I was shocked... I was unbelieving. I was frightened, very, very frightened. And I felt this was, you know, intimidation." She also said on record that her co-workers were intimidated by government officials. Although the V.A. has offered no apology, pressure is growing in New Mexico and across the nation. Senator Jeff Bingaman has called up Veterans Affairs Secretary James Nicholson to thoroughly investigate the course of action taken by the VA in reporting Berg to the FBI.

See KIDNAPPING page 8

An Open Letter to the Clemson Forum

HAFIZAH GETER
contributing
writer



Hafizah is an English major

After reading the letter to the editor in The Tiger written by our Student Body President, and our Undergraduate Senate President, I too want to say, I am sorry. I am sorry that they failed to note the difference between factual reporting, and irresponsible journalism. The article in The Observer was an article in which someone used their misinterpretation of the facts to promote their prejudices. And yes I am sorry, not that they printed it, but the fact that someone in our generation can be so blatantly bigoted.

As for The Forum, yes some were offended. Honestly I was offended, but not by the Forum's decision to print

it. These "cartoons" are pictures that should cause outrage among anyone who sees them, but they must be seen. We cannot say "take our word for it, be offended." If we want our generation to stand up against injustice, they must see these injustices for themselves. If the Forum simply instructs us on how we should feel, then what stops the Observer from saying "take our word for it, Islam is a religion of violence and murder?" The Forum was not "flexing the muscles of the First Amendment." They were saying that above all free speech should be absolute. It is a shame, no, a disgrace that these cartoons were created, that these cartoons incite violence, but it is even worse that we have not stood up and proclaimed that we will not tolerate such prejudices. No we would rather believe that if we do not see them, they do not exist. We have been blind for too long.

Who am I to say this? What do I know? I feel so strongly about this not because I am a minority, but because

half of my family is Muslim. I was born in Nigeria; I have grown up under the shroud of a Muslim state, surrounded by reverent Muslims. This upbringing has not shown me a religion of violence and blood shed, but one of community and love. The Islam I have seen is devout and peaceful. One that shows that tolerance IS a family value. What The Observer did was take a few radical Islamists and have them represent all of Islam. I do not look at all conservatives and see bigoted racists. I do not let the views of the Observer prejudice me against all whom they claim to represent. The views of a few radical Islamists do not represent all of Islam, just like the views of the Observer do not represent all conservatives.

The letter addressed to The Tiger simply enforces why it is necessary for us to view these images, so we can come to our own conclusions. The letter simply addressed the images, (yes they were offensive); it did not come close to addressing the messages of the

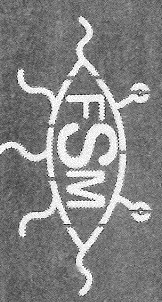
journalists. What must be judged is the message. And in the words of our Student Government leaders, I am sorry. I am sorry that they saw the cartoons and could not see anything else. I am sorry that they failed to realize that the problem lies in the message of the Forum. I am sorry that they lumped The Forum with The Observer, in the same way that radical Islamists are lumped with Islam as a whole. I am sorry that they would rather have this injustice hidden, than addressed. I am sorry that the negative press Clemson received is more important than educating our students. I am sorry that they took such a general, rather than informed stance. To my fellow students, our faculty, our administration, our respected alumni, our Board of Trustees, our visitors, our fellow South Carolinians and Americans—I am truly, truly sorry.

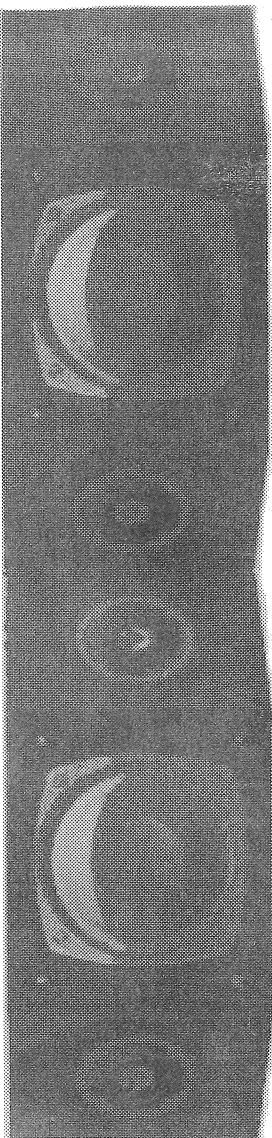
Sincerely,
Hafizah Geter

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The Clemson Forum
has been touched by
His Noodly Appendage





Forum Feedback

As a college professor and writer of fiction I applaud you for having the spine (and the respect for American freedom of the press) to print the Danish cartoons. When the fatwah was issued against The Satanic Verses, many American writers gave public readings from that "banned" text. I was one. We were threatened with bombs and with snipers, but we read from the book, aloud, in public, and we stood in support of a fellow artist, whether we were Muslims, atheists, fans of Rushdie or just lovers of literature. How times have changed. Now artists and administrators fear offending despots, bigots, and zealots. So long as folks like you do what's right, the country will be in good shape.

J. Blacktree

Congratulations on having the journalistic integrity to print the cartoons that have caused so much uproar. Everyone needs to see these to see how crazy these Muslim activists are. They are **CARTOONS** not at all depicting to be accurate, faithful portrayals of Mohammed. If no pictures are printed of him, how do we know this is what he looks like anyway?? These people are no more Muslim than the abortion clinic bombers are Christian (and I am a very conservative Christian, by the way). The Islamic idiots who are fomenting these riots should be called out for the hypocrites they are. Thanks for not giving in to the fear they seek to perpetuate. Good job.

Scott Moore
Clemson '91, PoSc

I hear you reprinted the controversial Muslim cartoons. Way to go! This issue epitomizes the clash between two worlds (i.e. "Free" and "Repressed" Worlds...) **DON'T APOLOGIZE FOR ANYTHING!** I am totally sick of this polite "politically correct" persona we are expected to portray! Stir the pot! Complacency breeds couch potatoes! Controversy breeds movers and shakers!

Kate MacDonald (an American who can trace her ancestry back to the American Revolution)

Just a quick note to say, **BRAVO!** I'm sure it was a tough and well thought out decision to reprint the cartoons of Muhammad. It appears that at least somewhere in this country young people are aware of just how precious and sacred their right to a "Free Press" is and exercising that right even in the face of adversity is the only way to truly maintain it.

Both of my sons attended USC in Columbia and married girls from Clemson (football season around here makes for some interesting family dynamics). My grandchildren **WILL** attend Clemson University!! **GO TIGERS!**

Laurence P. Smith

I find it hard to swallow some of [the Hamas] article. Hamas may be a violent opposition group-- but is it so hard to believe that most of the violence sparks not from Islamic fundamentalist ideas, but rather from the oppression that these people have experienced. It is in fact a pivotal flaw to label the Palestinians and their Hamas leaders as purely "Islamic fundamentalists". Not only does this advance the conservative outlook on the topic at hand, but it also is a label that's been perpetuated by the dull mass media, as well as its mostly conservative counterparts. The conservatives, rulers, etc. do not want to hear the Palestinians struggle labeled as one of anti-oppression and class warfare: as those seem a more legitimate type of fight to pursue than one of "Islamic extremism" and "religious extremism". We must come to terms that these peoples have been painted as terrorists, as religious fanatics, etc-- mostly to accelerate, and more importantly to legitimize the Israel-United States policy.

Justin (submitted via ClemsonForum.com)

I was disappointed with the decision by two student newspapers, the Clemson Forum and the Tiger Town Observer, to publish cartoons and articles knowing that many people would find them offensive. Included were cartoons that have made headlines around the world and sparked protests among Muslims for their depiction of Muhammad, something many Muslims consider a sacrilege.

While I wholeheartedly support freedom of the press and the right of student media to operate independently of administrative oversight and censorship, student journalists must understand that with rights come responsibilities, including the responsibility to be respectful of different faiths and beliefs.

One of Clemson's goals is to strengthen our sense of community and increase diversity. The publication of these cartoons does nothing to further that goal. The Clemson family encompasses many colors, nationalities and religions, and each of us contributes in a unique way to making Clemson a better university. I regret that the publication of these images may cause hurt to any student, faculty member, or staff member.

Sincerely,
James F. Barker
President

As always, The Clemson Forum encourages you to write in with your thoughts, opinions and comments. We do our best to print the most noteworthy letters we receive every month, completely unedited and generally unfiltered. The Forum is a marketplace for ideas, not just a soapbox for us to preach from. Whether you write to agree or disagree, everyone benefits from reading the reasonable opinions of their peers. As recent controversies, and many of the letters in this issue, tend to show, we know that you've all got your opinions. Let us have 'em!

Clemson Forum Staff

Letter From the Editor

Spring break is officially over, and, with the exception of grinding out a few more papers and trying not to fail my political theory class, there's nothing really to look forward to for the remainder of the semester.

Therefore, we should all look forward to each and every issue of the Forum

which, as we can see from February's issue, is always bursting with things that you can read and talk about with your peers.

Within this issue, I hope you'll find just as many note-worthy articles with topics that you'd like to discuss with your friends and professors or even to write to us about with your comments and opinions. We love mail.

As sad as everyone is that this is the second to last issue of the Forum for the semester, I urge you to keep reading and tell us what you think.

Enjoy,
Lindsay Stewart
Editor-in-chief



Lindsay is a Political Science major.

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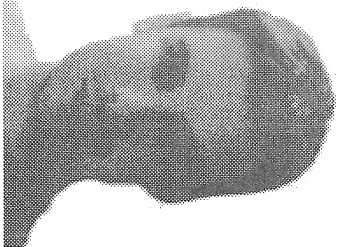
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Article feedback, past issues, it's all there.

South Dakota Abortion Ban Will Harm, Not Help, Pro-Life Cause

PETER BOURGON
staff writer



Peter is a Computer Engineering major.

The bill is itself more symbolic than practical. There is only a single abortion clinic in the entire state of South Dakota, and even anti-abortion activists admit most women go out-of-state to get abortions performed. Combined with an analysis of the language used in the bill, which directly and brazenly contradicts *Roe v. Wade*, it's evident that the conservative forces behind the legislation are activists, trying to get the issue before the new,

more conservative Supreme Court. Talk about irony. Of course, the legislation is being appealed, and as it makes the rounds through the appeals courts, on the way to the Supreme Court, it takes only a single "this law is unconstitutional" ruling, and one upholding of that ruling, to make the whole issue go away. Even among ardent anti-abortion crusaders, exceptions for rape and incest are generally given, so it seems unlikely that the case will ever make it up the ladder far enough to be heard by the Supreme Court. By being so draconian, and going so plainly against the mainstream public - not to mention judicial - opinion on the subject, it seems like the bill is almost doomed to failure. Even if the appeals process made it to Washington, *Roe v. Wade* isn't going anywhere. Five words: Souter, Ginsberg, Stevens, Breyer, Kennedy. While the ideological foundation of the Supreme Court may have shifted, it hasn't become a bench of demagogues. Almost every legal analyst agrees that these

five justices would stick to the *Roe v. Wade* guns. And that's a good thing. *Roe v. Wade* does more than establish abortion rights at the federal level. It affirms an American right to privacy that we all take for granted. And it is that American right - implicit in the Constitution, but explicit in the consequent legal opinion - that safeguards the freedoms and liberties that all Americans enjoy. By backing this bill, anti-abortion activists in South Dakota have chosen to ignore the opinions and beliefs of even moderate pro-lifers and, in so doing, most of the American public. Their bill will ultimately be declared unconstitutional, and subsequently possibly less idiotic, challenges to current abortion law will be all the more difficult to have heard as a result. But by championing the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, far-right extremists also by necessity rally against the right to privacy. That kind of invitation to true bigger government, in the worst possible sense, should be rejected by everyone who calls him or herself American.

Islam: Not the Cause of Middle Eastern Violence

ERIC GILES
Muslims contributing and their religion have



Eric is a Political Science major

been under intense scrutiny and undeserved criticism after the September 11th attack by conservative radicals who don't know the least bit about Islam. To be frank, I feel embarrassed that many in my country are so unworldly, ignorant and asinine as to call out the Muslim religion for being violent, backwards and evil, with only scant observations and shallow speculation to defend their opinions.

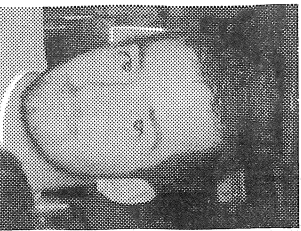
Lets take a look at one idiotic argument against Islam. They observe the Middle East and see that it is an unruly, impoverished, violent and uneducated area. They also observe that it is the Muslim elites who rule those countries. Putting two and two together, the radical right has come to the conclusion that it is the Islamic hierarchy that is responsible for the violence and disorder within the Muslim states. Now let's systematically destroy this. It is true that the Muslim elite manipulate many in the public into believing that the West, and anything supported by the West, is devilish and worth being destroyed by utilizing Jihad. Of course, it is also true that the Christian elite manipulated the layman in the middle ages into a violent surge against the Ottoman Empire during the Crusades. They stirred the men in Europe into an angry frenzy with religious and inflammatory rhetoric (similar to the rhetoric that

Islamic Clerics use), saying that Islam was evil, sinful and needed to be wiped out if they were to please God. It is also important to note that in the Middle Ages, it was Christian Europe that was disorderly and uncivilized, and the Islamic states that were sophisticated and the center for intellectual development. It should be clear after this that there is clearly no correlation between religion and passivity, intellectualism and progressive thought. What does inhibit these qualities is not religion, but the style of government. The similarity between both Europe in the Middle Ages and the Middle East in the present day is that both types of governments are designed to keep control over the masses. The main way they do this is by keeping the citizens uneducated, so that they are more easily persuaded into believing whatever the leadership tells

them. This, consequently, also leaves them vulnerable to religious demagogues who can use their subjects to carry out their own personal agenda. Religious followers have been taken advantage in both the Christian and Muslim faith. It is not unique to just Islam, contrary to the pejorative claims made by the religious right in this country. Religion is indeed one of the most powerful ideas to ever grace our world, but in the wrong hands, it can be one of the most deadly. It takes a well-educated public to keep ambitious religious leaders in check. Therefore, if the radical conservatives want the violence in the Middle East to stop, they should start pushing for political reforms, rather than ranting about a topic they don't have a clue about and inflaming an already tense situation.

Google - Don't Be Evil

ERIC OSGUTHORPE
staff writer



Eric is a CIS major.

Google recently came under fire for self-censoring search results, such as those dealing with Falun Gong, Dalai Lama or Tiananmen, under its google.cn domain. For those not in the know about China's government, Beijing controls almost all internet access, whether it be a personal internet connection or the information posted on a news website.

For years, users in China accessed a Chinese language version of Google; however, according to Google, the site is unavailable 10% of the time, Google Images is unavailable about half of the time and searches will lock up a user's browser at times. Rather than let Beijing do the censorship, and in turn, degrade the user's experience, Google decided to enter into the country, placing servers to afford its users better performance & results.

Those results are shaky at best. Many sites, such as savetibet.org and news.bbc.co.uk, are currently blocked, while others, like collegehumor.com and teenpregnancy.org, just recently escaped the censorship hammer. Not much is known of exactly how Google complies with Chinese regulations, whether it is through a government list or a self-created filter system.

A government list? China keeps their list of terms to be censored close to the vest, but a hacking group, who garnered an example from the popular QQ messaging client (similar to AIM), revealed that the censorship comprises 987 words. And this list isn't limited to just websites, it's also for e-mail &

text messaging. It isn't static either; it's ever changing to encompass even local stories. A Google-created filter system would work along the lines of this list.

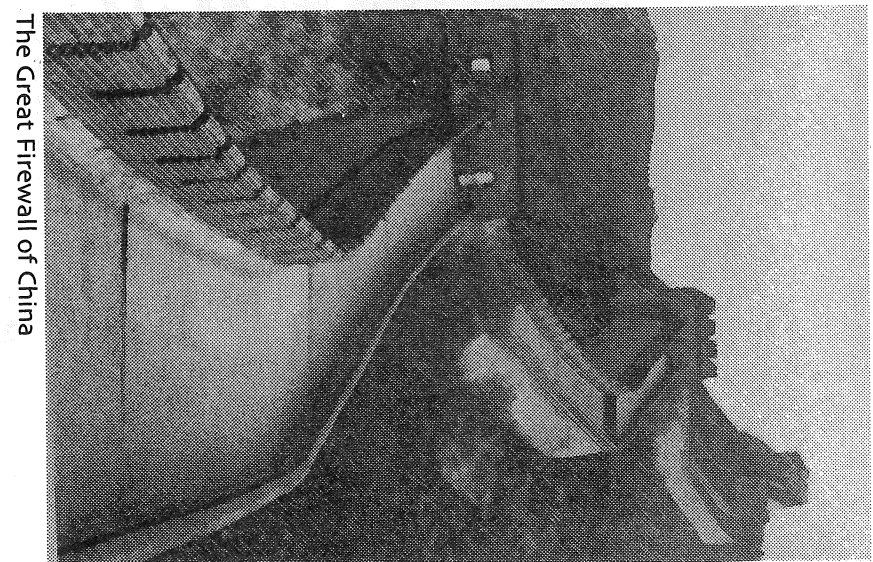
Automation aside, Beijing employs a staff of thirty thousand, a number that easily surpasses the entire workforce of our vaulted CIA, to monitor chat rooms, individual's blogs and the like. All of this in addition to the state-of-the-art computer banks & firewalls, designed purely to censor that all traffic must pass through.

Bottom line? According to China's "Public Pledge on Self-Discipline for the Chinese Internet Industry," companies must promise not to propagate information that "breaks laws or spreads superstition or obscenity," or that "may jeopardize state security and disrupt social stability."

Why did Google subject itself to such blatant Communist "regulations"? From the official Google blog: "Filtering our search results

clearly compromises our mission. Failing to offer Google search at all to a fifth of the world's population, however, does so far more severely." Yes Google, you did compromise your mission: the mission that brought you up into Western-world ubiquity, but not

in China, where you have little market share. So why? China's Ministry of Propaganda, the organization that screens all publications within the country, is known more for fear & intimidation, and being the puppet of the most ticked off Communist party leader, rather than offering impartiality & enforcing the law of the land. However, times are changing. The media & journalists have begun to more vocalize their displeasure with the ministry, organizing protests, strikes & garnering publicity. Former Communist party leaders stated, "At a turning point in our history from a totalitarian to a constitutional system, depriving the public of freedom of speech will bring disaster for our social and political transition and give rise to confrontation and social unrest."



The Great Firewall of China

Dollars & Benjamins, oh my! Behind the US, China is the second largest Internet market - and it's booming. That's why many companies, both do- See GOOGLE page 8

Biblically Correct Tours

KEAN WITZEMAN
staff writer

In 1988 Bill Jack and Rusty Carter co-founded Biblically Correct Tours, with the idea of giving tours in public museums that are biblically accurate. Based out of Littleton Colorado, B.C. Tours challenges what most in the public, not to mention scientific, community believe to be common knowledge, based on centuries of empirically tested scientific evidence. The tours are given mostly throughout the greater Denver area, and are likely to visit such institutes as the National Center for Atmospheric Research, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and various local zoos.

Mr. Jack and his associates attempt to refute many hot button issues such as evolution by contrasting them with biblical teachings. Catherine Tsai, reporting through the Associated Press, recorded one aspect of a tour given by Carter that even most devout Christians would find extreme. Carter, referring to the book of Genesis, leads his group in a dialogue that ends with the conclusion that both man and dinosaurs did in fact coexist, since God created both on the "sixth day" according to the story of Creation. Of course, such an assertion flies in the face of countless years of fossil evidence, carbon sampling, and innumerable works published by intellectuals that have spent their lives pursuing scientific knowledge to better understand our world.

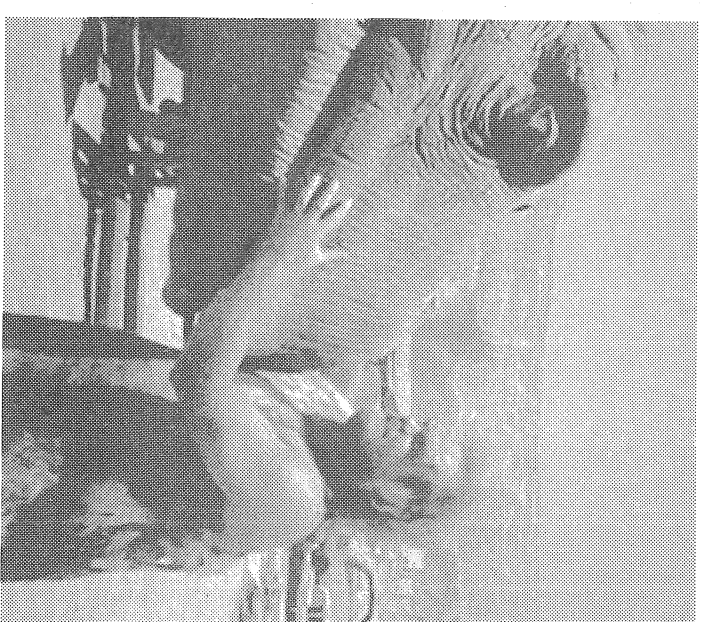
Carter, Jack and others involved with B.C. Tours have also publicly stated that the principles of evolution support such man made practices as abortion and genocide, as they are both means of induced natural selection based on racist ideals. Along those lines, head founder Jack recently said in an interview, "My contention is evolution kills people. It's not that evolutionists don't have morality, it's that evolution can offer no morality. Ideas have consequences. If you believe you came from slime there is no reason not to, if you can, get away with anything."

B.C. Tours conduct an average of 100 tours a year to primarily home-schooled children and

their parents, with a minimum fee of \$100 per tour. Tour packages like "Odyssey" and "Journey" can cost up to \$1,250 for up to thirty participants, and also include books, educational films, CD-ROM programs and audio CDs to accompany the tours. These media can also be purchased individually via their website at prices ranging from around \$15 all the way up to \$40 for some of the package deals.

Religion has undoubtedly served a lot of good for a lot of people over an extremely long period of time. Religious figures and individuals adhering to religious teachings in the name of altruism and good will have done much good. Holy people of all faiths from Mother Teresa to the Dalai Lama have made the world a better place with their sincere religious acts. In the same vein, people have also grossly misinterpreted the structures of organized religion, resulting in things like the Spanish Inquisition, the Crusades and of course the recent wave of violence perpetrated by Islamic radicals. In each incident, in the past as in today, the true teachings of religious doctrine were overshadowed by radical interpretation that corrupted and perverted.

The teachings of B.C. Tours, though certainly non-violent, are still misleading and damaging when ignorance is blatantly and proudly substituted for scientific knowledge and impressionable children are subjugated to it. Religion is not the ignorance I refer to, but rather the denial of scientific evidence and the inability to see, if one chooses, the Hand of God through science. To insist that biblical teachings and science cannot coexist, or that one must believe the bible verbatim as the unabridged word of God and refute everything else, is no more faith than those who handle dangerous snakes or drink cyanide based on obscure scripture passages. In each sense, ignorance and arrogance is surpassing what our God-given intellects have discovered to be true and subjugating people to danger in the name of Christianity. People will most likely continue to hire the likes of Mr. Jack and Mr. Carter for their services, which



Humans and dinosaurs coexisting peacefully, as per the Flinstones/fundamentalist Christian worldview.

is certainly admissible in a society where people have the freedom to educate themselves how they please. My hope is that devout religious individuals will continue to practice their faith in a way that leads them closer to God while at the same time not segregating themselves from such an amazing world of knowledge and discovery by being religiously narrow minded. After all, in the words of the great Albert Einstein, "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

Interested in writing for us?

Don't lie - of course you are.

theclemsonforum@yahoo.com

American Ports and Anti-Arab Prejudice

MICHAEL SANDERS
contributing
writer

On February 13, a United Arab Emirates based firm called Dubai Ports World paid \$6.8 billion for the British company P&O, which ran ports in six American cities.



Michael is a History major

There has been vociferous opposition from American politicians, especially Democratic senator Chuck Schumer and Republican representative Pete King. Senator Hillary Clinton has called for legislation to prohibit the sale of port operations to foreign governments. Even the Senate majority leader, Bill Frist, has asked for the president to take a second look at the deal. But why are these politicians opposed to the deal? Critics of the deal protest that it will harm national security. Perhaps

the most persuasive argument against the deal comes from columnist Charles Krauthammer, who commented, "as soon as the Dubai Company takes over operations, it will necessarily become privy to information about security provisions at crucial US ports. That would mean a transfer of information about our security operations -- and perhaps worse, about the holes in our security operations -- to a company in an Arab state in which there might be employees who, for reasons of corruption or ideology, would pass this invaluable knowledge on to al Qaeda types."

However, what makes us so confident that American or British nationals wouldn't pass on information to terrorists? Two of the 9/11 hijackers may have been from the UAE (United Arab Emirates), but all four of the London subway bombers were British citizens. Furthermore, the employees are likely to be unionized American citizens anyways, and any non-Americans would have to get a visa approved,

which is no easy task these days.

The Department of Homeland Security would still run the security in the ports. Kim Peterson, the executive director of the Maritime Security Council, stated, "This whole notion that Dubai is going to control or set standards for US ports is a canard." State Department spokesman Adam Ereli echoed her sentiments by adding, "Nothing in this acquisition has anything to do with the responsibility for security in American ports... What we're talking about is the management of some port operations." It seems that most politicians are opposed to the deal because it makes them look strong on national security. However, there is no indication that allowing a publicly run UAE-based company would be dangerous to our security. The UAE is a key ally in the war on terrorism. The English publication the Economist has noted, "the United Arab Emirates is a member of America's Container Security Initiative, which

allows American customs officials to inspect cargo in foreign ports before it leaves for America." David Ignatius of the Washington Post commented that "[Al Qaeda] accused the UAE leaders of working with the US government 'in order to appease the Americans' wishes which include: spying, persecution and detentions." Adam Ereli says that the UAE and America have a "strong and effective partnership from a counterterrorism point of view."

The political opposition stems from fear and prejudice. Domestic point scoring has triumphed over common sense. In no way does the port deal endanger America. Let the experts in the bureaucracy determine the details of how our ports are run and not the politically motivated politicians in Congress. Even Krauthammer had to concede that DP World "manages ports in other countries without any such incidents."

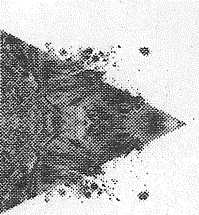
Media Quick Picks

ERIC OSGUTHORPE
staff writer

Rock Out in Your Garage

Wolfmother - Dimensions.

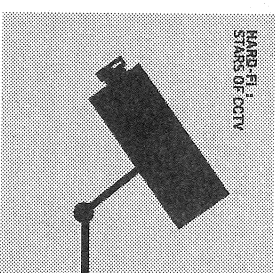
Looking to rock out to something other than the White Stripes? Don't look for much originality here, it's Black Sabbath & Deep Purple rehashed for our decade, but with the lead sounding like an Ozzy/Jack White spawned child, this band rocks out.



VOLAHER

Hard-Fi - Stars of CCTV.

Yet another band hailing from the UK along the lines of Kaiser Chiefs with a more Clash-inspired sound. The kids from West London strike out in the chic, post-punk style.



HARD-FI STARS OF CCTV

Arctic Monkeys - Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not. The press in the UK has been huge, and their debut album is Britain's fastest-selling of all time. Take the hint. It's mighty fine, smart-ass, biting punk.

Movies With A Purpose

The Motorcycle Diaries. You see all those Che Guevara posters in your friend's room? Find out why the man became THE communist revolutionary in a beautifully shot recreation of his trip through South America.

Good Night, And Good Luck. George Clooney's wonderfully done commentary on journalism & fear mongering, the film does great justice to a time your parents experienced - McCarthyism.

Why We Fight. Eugene Jarecki's documentary is a thinking man's Fahrenheit 9/11, documenting the economic impact of the American war-machine.

Monthly Foruncation: Sex on Screen

CHARLOTTE WEBB
columnist

The textbook from my "Human Sexual Behavior" class lists three influences for shaping cultural norms on sexuality: the mass media, family, and religion. But where do we learn what sex is actually going to be like before we have it? My parents were the greatest force in keeping me from making any stupid sexual decisions. They told me about STDs and pregnancy and taught me words like "ejaculate." But what does the explanation "the couple puts the man's penis into the woman's vagina" really tell you about the experience of sex? As for religion, all the Bible would tell me was that "Person 1 went into Person 2, and Person 2 conceived." Penis into vagina...right. I had that much already. Which brings me to that third influence. Growing up I spent maybe two hours a day with my parents, two hours a week in church, and six hours a day with my television.

Mass media is where we go for the details. It was television and movies that taught me it isn't so much a "putting" as it is a "repeated thrust-

ing." Parents, without fail, leave that part out. TV showed me couples having sex montage-style. There is kissing, clothes fall to the floor, then some rhythmic gyrating motion under sheets which always manage to cover the woman's breasts even if it defies logic, and finally the couple is lying in bed, man's arm around the woman, sheets still carefully placed. For years, that was my impression of sex, but curiosity would drive me to pause in my channel surfing any time I saw a significant amount of flesh on the screen.

Now I no longer watch television to waste time. I have the Internet. Before that drastic shift even occurred I got tired of haphazard channel surfing and turned to the source the Internet affords us that everyone of our generation and younger eventually turns to- porn. I wasn't even that curious about sex yet, but, gosh darn it, I wanted to know what a penis looked like. And what did I find? I found Disembodied penises raping women who acted like they enjoyed it. It made me hate the sex I had never had.

This is an example of how American prudishness hurts our society. My first sight of a penis should not have been in footage of a woman being raped by two men. We need more middle ground - something between those blanketed sex scenes and porn. We need more nudity and we need more graphic sex scenes in the context of a loving relationship. The first time I saw full-frontal male nudity in a movie was in the foreign film "Goodbye Lenin" in 2003. My first thought was "My goodness! Nudity!" followed by "And there is nothing wrong with it. He's just... naked. How refreshing." It would be equally re-



The cinematic embrace has come a long way since the 50's

A Day in the Life of an Engineer in Afghanistan

SEAN CALLOT
contributing writer



Sean is a Political Science major.

In an actual organized war against an organized enemy force, like a Soviet-style army, the combat engineer unit is trained to build the battlefield to the specifications of the Allied force commander. The engineer installs minefields, barbed and razor wire obstacles, and ten-foot-deep anti-tank ditches to limit the enemy's movement across the battlefield. To do this, the combat engineer is trained to use whatever means are available. If all an engineer unit has is explosives, then they're going to use those explosives however they can to complete the mission. If the mission takes an engineer deep into enemy territory, so be it. Such is the uncertain and dangerous life of the engineer.

However, if Afghanistan were a normal war, then it would have been over in 2002. Afghanistan, needless to say, isn't a normal war. It's an engineer war. The sapper truly comes into his own in the Afghanistan theater of operations.

As a sapper in Afghanistan, one finds himself doing every job in the book. The biggest threats to allied operations are mines, unexploded bombs, and improvised explosive devices. For the common soldier, these are the primary enemies on the battlefield. But for the sapper, these are his prey. An average day for a combat engineer does not exist, per se. Depending on what the engineer has been tasked to do for the deployment, the day could be mundane and mind-numbingly dull, or the day could be incredibly dangerous. Simply put, it all depends on the mission.

One of the most critical missions in Afghanistan is area clearance. That is, a combat engineer unit, usually eight sappers, a medic or specially-trained soldier called a Combat Lifesaver, the mission site officer or non-commissioned officer (usually a senior

sergeant) in charge, and a site safety supervisor all go to a mission site and sweep every inch of the ground for mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Even though the most advanced mine detectors are available to the sapper for this type of mission, the job of pulling the unstable and highly explosive devices out of the ground still falls to a sapper, on his stomach, sticking a knife into the ground with careful precision. One false move, and not even the armored vest and protective face shield will do much more than ensure that there will be a piece of soldier just large enough to bury. The stress of this mission provides enough insurance that the sapper probing the ground will have some interesting story for his kids, as long as he survives long enough to get home.

As dangerous as area clearance missions are, route clearance missions provide a whole new series of dangers. A squad or so of engineers, trained in the use of specialized mine-resistant vehicles, drive up and down primary roads and trails through the mountains of Afghanistan, looking for the same mines and roadside bombs that most sane soldiers try desperately to avoid. Each soldier knows the risks of their mission, not the least of which is being blown to tiny pieces by remotely detonated improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Route clearance patrols routinely find themselves the specific targets of enemy ambushes and directed attack IEDs, built from armor-piercing rockets and shaped charge mines. Any one of these threats would prove deadly, but the enemy has become quite adept at combining them into a very nasty combined operation. The most startling fact for most people, however, is that these dedicated sappers conduct these missions every day, often for several days at a time, with no rest.

In sharp contrast to these almost ridiculously dangerous operations are construction missions. Afghanistan is fast becoming a major center for

combat operations in the Middle East. As such, the necessity for construction missions cannot be overstated. Whether the soldiers are building bunkers or guard towers, or huts to house the latest wave or replacement soldiers or Special Forces operators, combat engineers routinely find their skills of improvisation turned to the task of building. In these missions, the risks are much lower, but their level of dedication does not wane in the least.

The crown jewel of the combat engineer's operational crown, however, is the opportunity to work with the best of the best in the US Armed Forces have to offer. Commonly referred to by command as Other Coalition Forces, the US Army's Special Forces and Rangers often request sapper support for their unorthodox missions. These missions, often code word classified, vary from area clearance under conditions more arduous than normal, to assisting in raids against enemy leaders and suppliers of weapons and explosives. These missions are dangerous in their own right, but have the added benefit of providing the sapper with experience and knowledge he won't find anywhere else during his usual tour of duty.

After this kind of basic explanation of what a combat engineer does in Afghanistan, the question the reader may be asking is "why on earth would anyone voluntarily do this?" There is no simple answer. For some soldiers, it's a chance to do something few other people have. For others, the adrenaline rush is enough. Still other soldiers are simply insane, and find comfort in their insanity through these missions. Ultimately, though, a combat engineer does his job because he knows that if he doesn't, who will?

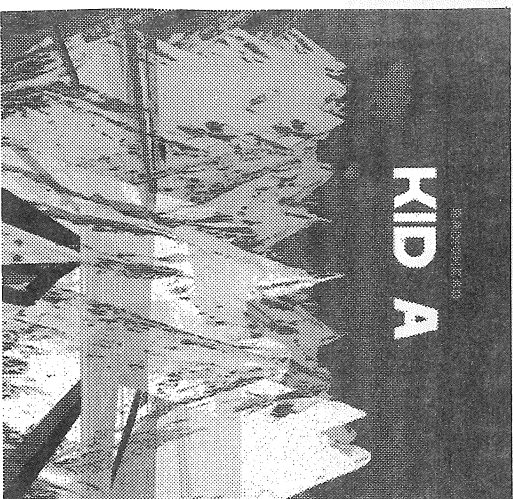
Sean J. Callot is a senior in political science. He is also a combat engineer serving in Afghanistan and has participated in each of the missions described above during his tour of duty



Army Engineers: "Build and Destroy" (image from belvoir.army.mil)

Why Kid A Matters

Radiohead's year 2000 release redefined rock - and is the most important album of the decade



PETER BOURGON
staff writer

Googling for reviews of Radiohead's Kid A is always an interesting experience. Rolling Stone asks "This is pop?" -- then answers itself, affirming that it is in fact "a music of ornery, glistening guile and honest ache, and it will feel good under your skin once you let it get there." The Onion's AV Club remarks that "the alien soundscapes are so foreign that it's easy to get lost," deciding finally that "Kid A is the sound of a rock band continuing to rewrite the rules so that the old rules (critical, musical, commercial) no longer apply." The always-loffy Pitchfork Media reviewer uses a story about Florence as a springboard to a series of drastic statements: that Kid A is "an album which completely obliterates how albums, and Radiohead themselves, will be considered," that it's an "emotional, psychological experience" that "sounds like a clouded brain trying to recall an alien abduction." Or that "the experience and emotions tied to listening to Kid A are like witnessing the stillborn birth of a child while simultaneously having the opportunity to see her play in the afterlife on Imap."

Music snobs and critics can unwittingly create an atmosphere around an album, or a band, that begs to be rejected. That Kid A managed to bring this level of pretentiousness to bear on itself is really too bad. Because it, in all of its paltry 49 minutes, is almost without a doubt the most influential and most important album of the ten years before it, and probably for another ten years to come. It draws from influences that define all modern music, and has even in the 5 short years since its release had a direct influence on a huge number of rock, pop, and electronic artists and producers. Pretentious or not, Kid A has literally redefined a generation of music.

Albums and Artists that Influenced Kid A

Radiohead - OK Computer. Kid A is as much evolution as it is revolution. Many of the tracks on it, and the sister album Amnesiac, are holdovers from Radiohead's OK Computer sessions. Thematically, and on tracks like Fitter Happier or the ephemeral Paranoid Android, the progression is easy to trace.

Bjork - Homogenic. Radiohead's front man, Thom Yorke, hooked up with Bjork for a duet on her 2000 release Selmasongs. But Bjork's influence on Thom (and their friendship) goes back further than the exceptional I've Seen It All track. Homogenic is characteristic Bjork, mixing early-90s electronic breaks with sweeping strings and the characteristic wail that makes her unmitigatable. The parallels to Kid A's How To Dismember Completely and Idioteque are obvious.

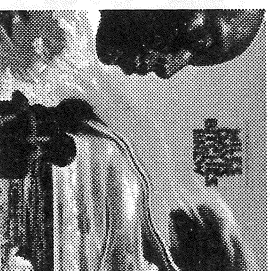
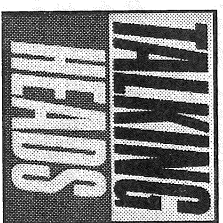
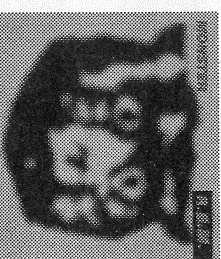
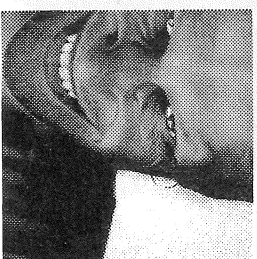
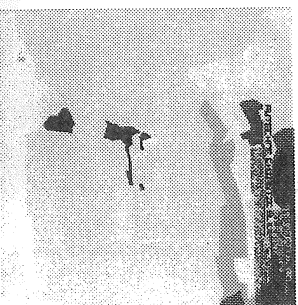
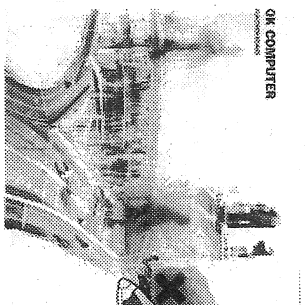
Auteteche - Chastic Slide. Here Auteteche could easily be replaced by any band from Warp Records' catalog, which is about as bleeding-edge as electronic music gets. Radiohead listed Auteteche as a direct influence on Idioteque, which was a track really paved the way for the electrification of rock music in general. Bassist Colin noted, "One of the things Thom was into was Warp Records, and the different sounds. He was sick of the same sounds, the same things make the same noises on similar records." Auteteche is nothing if not different.

Aphex Twin - The Richard D. James Album. Another Warp Records poster boy, Aphex Twin has made a name for himself by being at once impossibly, unlistenable complex and strangely beautiful. Kid A's Treefingers is part Yellow Calx, part Eno's Music For Airports, and Everything In Its Right Place can almost echo parts of Girl-Boy Song.

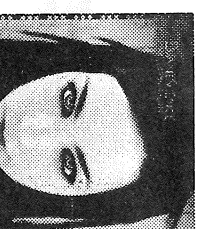
REM - Monster. Yorke and REM's Michael Stipe toured together in the early 90's, and when the band was feeling down after the OK Computer tour, Thom apparently got a lot of sound advice from Stipe, and credit is his to this day with helping keep Radiohead together. Treefingers as a musical interlude owes REM some credit, but really the connection here is personal rather than audible.

Talking Heads - True Stories. Radiohead always listed this album among their favorites, even when they were known as On A Friday in the early 90's. In fact, they took their name from it. The influence on Kid A is more dramatic than on any other album.

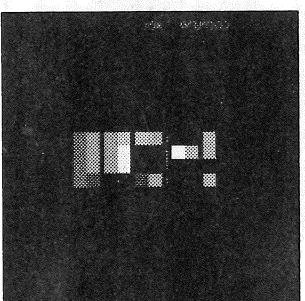
Miles Davis - Bitches Brew. The band directly cited Alice Coltrane as an influence, but on tracks like The National Anthem or, to a lesser extent, Motion Picture Soundtrack, the "free jazz" sound that Davis created with Bitches Brew shines through. It's a sound that's more prominent on the follow-up Amnesiac.



Artists Influenced by Kid A



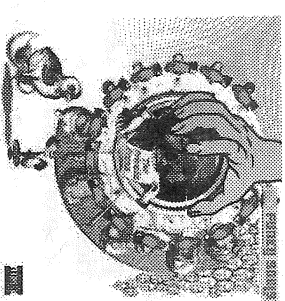
Evanescence - Fallen. Radiohead made it okay to mix rock and electronica and have the result be popularly palatable. While Evanescence might not be a particularly good band, they clearly blend nu-metal with the 21st century sound that was forged by Kid A.



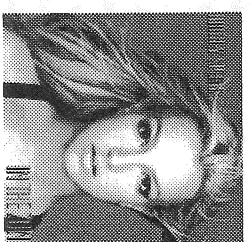
Coldplay - X&Y. Coldplay front man Chris Martin once famously described his band as "eager dogs yapping at Radiohead's heels." Coldplay has always been formulaic Britrock, and since Radiohead started to evolve away from The Bend they have been happy to fill the space left behind. But listen to the first thirty seconds of OK Computer, then Kid A, and then do the same with A Rush of Blood or Parachutes, and X&Y. If you're anything like me, the similarity is astounding.



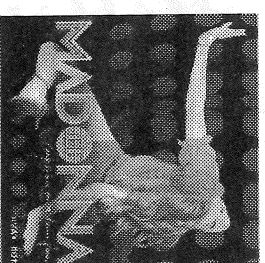
The Flaming Lips - Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots. Wayne Coyne has always really done his own thing, but charting the progress between The Soft Bulletin and Yoshimi draws a number of obvious parallels to the OK Computer / Kid A transition. Yoshimi is upbeat where Kid A is melancholy, but they follow the same path and use many of the same techniques: both have heavily electronic backing. (Now when can we see Kid A Battles the Hip Hop Robots?)



DJ Shadow - The Private Press. Like Bjork/DJ Shadow worked with Yorke on his UNKILLED project's Psyence Fiction album. That effort - Rabbit In Your Headlights - is really worthy of your time, and the video is probably one of the best videos ever made. On the subject of The Private Press, Shadow said that he "was also influenced by Kid A and Amnesiac, in that respect that those albums are so diverse musically, and I really wanted to hear that, and I wanted my album to reflect that as well."



Britney Spears - In The Zone. When Kid A debuted at #1 on the charts, you can bet Britney (or at least her people) were paying attention. You can't listen to Toxic and pretend the guy who produced that track didn't spend a long time with Idioteque and a pair of headphones and really the whole album tries to break through barriers that Radiohead broke in 2000. Of course, it fails miserably (In The Zone is practically unlistenable) but the effort is notable.



Madonna, Trent Reznor, Michael Jackson, Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt. The musicians each listed Kid A as one of their favorite albums, and Tom Cruise's Vanilla Sky opens with Everything In Its Right Place. Kid A even features prominently in the plot. Brad Pitt lists Radiohead among his favorite artists, and reportedly tried to bring them on to do the Fight Club soundtrack.



Kid Rock. Maybe not influenced in the classic sense, but when asked about his opinion on Kid A, Mr. Rock opined "more power to 'em, but I don't get it. If you like Radiohead's record, don't buy mine." I don't think this will be a problem.

To learn more about Radiohead, the best fan site out there is probably Green Plastic (www.greenplastic.net). Discography, biography, interviews - check it out.

What Would Chuck Norris Do?



Trevor is an English major

TREVOR SEIGLER
contributing writer

The situation: You're at a party with your high-school friends, and one of them pulls out a marijuana "joint" and proceeds to light it up and take long puffs on it. Then he passes it around to your circle of pals, with each giving in to the peer pressure that is inherent in such a situation. Your turn comes up, and everyone's eyes turn to you as you take the joint and hold it close by. And you wonder to yourself, "what would Chuck Norris do?"

The response: If Chuck Norris were faced with this situation, he would have some serious questions in need of answering - "Why was I invited to a party with a bunch of kids young enough to be my grandchildren?", "What am I doing with my life that I have time to spend with underage brats outside the martial arts arena?" and finally "Why am I the only one wearing cowboy duds?"

But Norris would focus his attention on the moment that the joint is produced from its primary source, keeping in mind that he is a role model for young children. Young children who aren't that smart, obviously, and can't see through the paper-thin plots and stereotypical villains that rendered Mr. Norris' show "Walker, Texas Ranger" unintentionally funny. When it became a running gag on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien", surely Chuck realized that the tale of a strong-willed Texas Ranger with his own sense of justice and a questionable mix of Oriental philosophy and fundamentalist Christian dogma as a personal faith who dispatches his enemies not by turning his other cheek but by turning their cheeks with a swift roundhouse kick and doesn't see the irony in that is somehow made for mockery.

Scanning the room for signs of other adults who could bust the teens' illicit joy (there are none), Chuck is convinced that he will have to stand up and be the one hero in the situation who does the right thing. There is the problem that Kenny, the asthmatic kid you know from Shop, seems to be puffing on the joint like a newbie, with little consideration for his fellow partygoers. What with the rising cost of dime bags in most suburban drug markets, weed don't come cheap, man. Norris eyes Kenny with a mixture of admiration for the youngster's guf (perhaps the young man is trying to ensure that no one else will be able to go one toke over the line) and some anger as he wants to be able to raise the still-lit joint himself, ground it into the floor below him, and come up with some hip-to-be-square quip like "Drugs are for dopes" or perhaps "the only roaches I care for are the ones that I can crush underneath my boot when they come crawling out from under the fridge where I keep my beer...don't be surprised that I drink beer, children! I'm a grown man...I have needs."

Norris would finally get the roach passed his way after Barbara (the friendly but plain girl who follows you around all the time) stumbles through her one attempt at getting high and merely ends up with a cloud of smoke surrounding her head. He looks at it with his trademark squint, eyeballs the other partygoers who look on him as a hero and role model. Should he take a puff, just to see what it's like? Or should he take the high road (no pun intended) and put an end to their dopey party (pun intended).

Just then, Norris' costar Clarence Gilyard breaks into the room and alerts him that Ramon Sanchez (or some other Spanish-named drug dealer from a vaguely identified nation in South America) has kidnapped Walker's beloved, Alex, and is holding her and CD (Walker's bartending friend) hostage in his heavily armed lair. Norris, caught up in the moment, simply lets the blunt fall to the ground as he runs to start up his truck and ride off alone to take on Sanchez and his private army. He has only his gun, which he will not need, and his martial arts skills. But Chuck Norris has no worries.

Because he is as high as a kite right now. Sorry to disappoint you, kids.

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Ignorance is Bliss



Bryan is an Electrical Engineering major

BRYAN COCKFIELD
contributing writer

With all the pressing and novel issues in America today such as the war on terror, gay marriage, domestic wiretapping, or fear of cartoons, it seems that we should have had the old "racial discrimination" problem solved by now.

But in a typical suburban town in North Carolina there is a church that does not allow African Americans to join. The members of this "Christian" organization oversaw the construction of a smaller church for all of their unwanted members.

So when a black family unknowingly comes into the church (which I must remind you is supposedly Christian), there is a member who tells them that they aren't welcome. Before anyone

makes any attempt to get to know the hopeful new members, they are directed to the smaller minority establishment which is several miles away.

This is not the only place in the United States to overlook the Supreme Court's decision that "separate but equal" facilities are unconstitutional, but the fact that this church is in my hometown left me extremely unsettled. (They also refuse people who choose alternate lifestyles.) I had accepted the fact that some people were still about a hundred years behind the times as far as "basic human rights" went, but I never expected it to hit so close to home.

After I found out about this, I started to wonder what would cause my neighbors and friends to have this backwards attitude, and also what would cause such an immoral tradition to be encouraged,



The fires of tolerance are started with just a single spark.

yet kept under wraps so well. It used to be easy for me to dismiss stories of racism as something that only happens several hundred miles southwest of here and only comes from extremists or radicals who ride their horses through the streets dressed head-to-toe in white bed sheets with hoods. This stereotype of racists may fit the bill some of the time, but mostly, as in the case of this church, racism is ultimately perpetuated by traditionalists, and hidden behind walls of churches and other facades.

However, the most baffling thing about all of this is to wonder, "Who would stand for such a thing?" Who, in their right mind, would knowingly be under the influence of racism or racial profiling and think to themselves, "This is just the way it has to be," and then give in without a fight? It is baffling that this indifferent attitude is present today at all, but what of the people who simply put up with it?

These people are as much to blame for the racial prejudice that is around today as those who are actually racially prejudiced. Even though they are not the direct cause, those who do nothing about it also perpetuate its existence. Like people who yell at referees during basketball games because they know that the referees can't yell back, racists are encouraged when they encounter no resistance to their ignorant madness.

Some Americans are taking steps in the right direction, however, especially those who are in the public eye. Kanye West has the general idea of how to solve this problem - although putting Mike Myers on the spot perhaps wasn't the best way to go about doing things. He hits the nail on the head, however, in the song "Never Let Me Down" off of the album "The College Dropout" when he says that "racism's still alive, they're just concealing it."

See IGNORANCE page 8

At Least Cheney is Sticking to

His Guns



DANIEL BJORK
contributing writer

It has been nearly a month since the Vice President shot 78 year old Harry Whittington in the face while hunting for quail on a ranch in south Texas, and after all

of the fall out from this accident, I will come to the defense of the Vice President. While many in the mainstream media have taken this opportunity to bash Vice President Cheney, I believe he was justified in shooting Harry Whittington.

All of the intelligence said that there were quail in the bushes that the Vice President was shooting into when he shot Harry Whittington. Everyone thought there were quail in those bushes. Put yourself in the Vice President's shoes: you're hunting for quail, and all of the information you and your hunting buddies have says that there are quail in the bushes. Wouldn't you shoot? There was simply no way that the Vice President



Cheney proudly accepts his ceremonial boomstick.

could have known that what he thought was quail would actually turn out to be a 78 year old man.

While some have suggested that the Vice President purposely misused this information so that he could shoot Harry Whittington, the Vice President's office says that that is not the case. Jonathan Croch, a spokesman for Vice President Dick, said in a statement after the shooting, "we all know that at one

See CHENEY'S GUNS page 8

Don't Drop the Baton On This One

GREG SCHWINDAMAN
contributing writer



Greg is a Finance major.

Relay for Life will be held in Clemson on April 7th. For those of you who have never participated, it is, as the American Cancer Society puts it, "a fun-filled overnight event designed to celebrate survivorship and raise money to help the American Cancer Society save lives, help those who have been touched by cancer, and empower individuals to fight back against this disease." Cancer is an issue that affects most of us directly, with family or friends having to fight the often-deadly disease. Apparently George Bush is one of the few not affected. In his 2006 budget, he proposes 40 million dollars in cuts to the National Cancer Institute. This institute funds the large majority of the cancer research going on in the United States today. The cuts affect us directly here at Clemson with a Clemson researcher holding one of the grants from the NCI to study nonparametric multiple regression techniques. While, like you, I have no clue what that means, important research like this currently is being funded at universities across the country including the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina. Even at its current funding level, only 11% of the grants applied for through NCI can be accepted.

Another important cancer related cut that directly affects some of the women here at Clemson is the proposed 1.2 million dollar cut to the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. This program makes available free cancer screenings to low-income and uninsured women and despite being under funded has proven successful. In the past three years the program has detected 23,000 cases of breast cancer and 1,500 cases of cervical cancer. That's a lot of women that have potentially been saved by early detection.

The U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, Michael Leavitt, says, "We had to make hard choices, hard choices about very well-intentioned programs. Every program is important to someone." While I agree the choices had to be hard, cancer is important to a whole lot of someone. While sacrifices must be made to solve the current budget crisis Bush has put us in, priorities must be set. We cannot surrender the long-term health of America to a disease that affects so many. The current level of funding already seems inadequate and cuts would only further decrease the rate of progress on cancer research. At least now you'll have something to think about as you walk around that bag-fit path at Relay for Life.

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Google continued from page 3

mesic & foreign, have bowed to the Ministry of Propaganda. AOL has censored searches, Yahoo admitted to providing data which led to a 10-year jail sentence for a journalist. Microsoft has taken down a dissident blog, and US networking firm Cisco provides the People's Republic with routers & switches used to create China's great firewall.

While all the companies take a small publicity hit, the general public isn't willing to boycott. After all, who wants to go back to the altavista days? Legislation is in the works to dissuade US internet companies from locating servers in China, thus removing the ability of the government to seize personal data. A bill may be the answer, but a Code of Ethics, subscribed to by internet & technology firms, provides a better solution. Such a code would not only provide a definitive statement and a far greater chance for free speech to succeed in China, it would address many ethical issues facing the information technology field. One hopes that Google will take the lead again, truly living up to it's credo, "Don't Be Evil."

Kidnapping

continued from page 1

secret CIA prisons, most rational Americans will still defend the actions of the majority of our servicemen and women. For this reason, I am begrudgingly willing to accept the rationale behind holding women in an attempt to capture their husbands. I trust that our military holds these women in humane conditions and does not violate the rules of war in dealing with them. It is a controversial subject, but it does not seem out of line when dealing with such a brutally ruthless enemy. If our military handles the situation appropriately, valuable information can be gathered, dangerous enemies can be captured and no human rights need be seriously violated.

On the other hand, investigated a woman, who has devoted her life to helping American veterans, for sedition when she speaks out harshly against the government is completely unacceptable. Yes, she called for the public to act forcefully to remove an administration that she and many others do not support. The interpretation of such a statement is open to interpretation, but it is possible to "act forcefully" utilizing democratic means and not violence. Surely this lady did not mean to bring violence or harm in any way to our nation's leaders, so an investigation of the nature she underwent is uncalled for. Many people in America have called for the resignation of Bush Administration officials, from Secretary Rumsfeld to Karl Rove to the President himself. In a democratic society, this is acceptable. As the Bush Administration expands it's assault on the American public's civil liberties, people like Laura Berg will continue to have the strength to stand up for what they believe in. Regardless of where individual opinion falls in this debate, I hope we here at Clemson will continue to do the same.

Cheney's Guns

continued from page 7

time there were quail in the bushes," and that "there is no doubt over this because [ranch owners] had earlier put quail in those bushes." In the statement, Crotch says that perhaps the quail had not been in the bushes for some time, but that the Vice President "could never have known that because the bush was full of prickly leaves, making detailed inspection impossible." Crotch also suggested, however, that it is possible that someone simply moved the quail. "Perhaps the quail had been in the bushes, and Mr. Whittington moved them to some other bushes just before he was shot in the face. We can never know."

Despite this clearly accidental shooting, the mainstream media has given the Vice President no credit for sticking to his guns. When asked recently if, knowing what he knows now, he would still have shot into the bushes, Vice President Cheney said that he would have. Even if he had had the knowledge that it was actually Harry Whittington in the bushes and not quail, the Vice President said "to not shoot into the bushes would send a message to the quail that America was weak" and that "the American people expect their leaders to be decisive and consistent; at that time I decided it was best to shoot what I thought were quail in the bushes, and I stand by that decision."

I say we should be proud to have a strong and consistent leader like Vice President Cheney leading us; and after all, who is the media to question the way this administration wages a hunt on quail? By doing this, we are sending a message to the quail that we are not united in our commitment to hunt them. The Vice President believed whole-heartedly that there were quail in those bushes, and he acted accordingly. While he did actually end up shooting a 78-year-old man in the face, at least he did what he felt was right and holds an unwavering commitment to that decision.

Ignorance

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Indeed, the defeat of racism will come when people do not stand idly by and watch as something happens that is wrong. When people speak out, a real change can occur. It is easy to write racism off as something that happens in far-off places, rather than an actual problem that must be faced by everyone.

Still, the fact that this church encounters no resistance leads to another question: Is racism all right as long as it is accepted by the community? Even though the answer is obviously "no," based on examples such as Nazi Germany or the forced servitude of Africans in the United States before the Civil War, on the surface it seems that many people feel that such acts are in fact justified when a society accepts them.

However, the church admittedly has a first-amendment right to hang up a sign that says, "We reserve the right to refuse ser-

vice to anyone." Even though I'm sure this isn't the ideal Christian message, if the whole of the church believes it and encounters no resistance to it, then, in their minds, there is no reason to change. This is somewhat of a problem.

I have a hard time figuring out why the people in my hometown who are affected simply put up with these racist attitudes. After everything that was accomplished leading up to and during the Civil Rights Movement, it is hard to imagine how anyone could take such a slap in the face and move to the different church without a fight.

Perhaps if the current members of the smaller church had taken a stand against the larger church, a small step towards the ultimate goal of a truly integrated society would have been taken. But when evil is accepted, it becomes the norm.

As a former student in North Carolina's public education system, not only was I exposed to the revolutionary ideas of the people who first came up with the phrase "all men are created equal," but I went to a school where white people were a minority.

I have many good African American friends from the classrooms I was in, and the clubs I participated in. Through these friendships, I was able to learn that the idea of equality was not just something that is preached in textbooks and proclaimed by people throughout history. Equality is in fact an undeniable truth, and for anyone to preach against it is something that must somehow be stopped no matter where it occurs.

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