THE MICHIGAN REVIEW

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Students' Party Ousts MSA Rivals

BY BENJAMIN KEPPLE

IN AN AMAZING DEPARTURE from recent elections, the Students' Party emerged victorious from a hard–fought, partisan campaign for seats on the Michigan Student Assembly (MSA). Students' Party presidential candidate Mike Nagrant and vice presidential candidate Olga Savic captured the top two executive seats on MSA, defeating established Michigan Party rivals Probir Mehta and Dan Serota by the wide margin of 307 votes. The Students' Party also walked away with nine representative seats in MSA, winning five seats in LSA, and one seat each in Business, Rackham, SNRE, and Pharmacy. And if electoral domination over MSA was not enough, the *Students'* Party also captured the executive seats of the College of Literature, Science and the Arts' Student Government (LSA-SG), with Lauren Shubow and Geeta Bhatia being elected in an extremely close race.

15% of the student body voted in this election, and while it may seem like an abysmal number, it actually represents an incredible jump in the number of students voting. This year's total of 4870 votes cast is a 30% increase over last year's count of 3,737. The high number of votes led to many wondering about the outcome not only in the two presidential races, but also in the races for representative and whether any of the four ballot proposals would pass.

In the MSA presidential race, Nagrant and Savic received 1,599 votes (32.7% of the vote), compared to the 1,292 votes (26.4%) garnered by Mehta and Serota. The five smaller parties which also fielded candidates generally fared bad to worse, with the United Rebels Front (URF) coming in a distant third with 323 votes (6.6%) for Pak Man Shuen and Stuart Krein. Close behind the URF was the Voice for Black Freedom and Student Power ("Voice") ticket of Jessica Curtin and Nikita Little, which received 273 votes (5.6%), while the Victors Party ticket of Jim Riske and Craig Myles received 149 (3.1%). Rounding out the bottom was the Pissed Off with Korrupt Executives (POKE) Party with 95 votes (1.9%), and the Liberty Party with 83 (1.6%).

Nagrant and Savic were pleased with their victory and ready to begin work.

Savic said that one of her goals was to make the Assembly "an organization like it has never been before." Savic said that she hoped for more cooperation between the members of the Assembly and to "accomplish projects and get things done."

"The general feeling is that something major needs to be changed in the way the Assembly interacts with each other." Savic said, adding that she hoped to implement strategy planning meetings and to build bonds between the Assembly members.



MSA Vice President Olga Savic during the campaign.

In addition, Savic said that she hoped to see "lots of change in the efficiency of [the MSA internal office]" to make that body "better able to serve representatives and students." Savic emphasized that she would also greatly increase the communication between the office staff, the executive officers, and the representatives.

The defeated Michigan Party candidates said they were planning to work for the behalf of students on campus. Probir Mehta said that "I plan to be involved with many student groups helping younger students foster their leadership skills. Mainly, I want to use the experience and insight that I have gained to aid student groups and students as a whole, and especially first, and second year students. I will continue my involvement with the Indian–American community as well as the larger University scene. I am glad that I still have a year to make a difference." Dan Serota mentioned that "meanwhile, I plan

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Affirmative Action: How Affirmative?

BY EVAN KNOTT AND MAUREEN SIRHAL

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS a touchy issue. In an increasingly racially divided country, the whole purpose behind affirmative action programs has been called into question. That occurs everywhere but the University of Michigan.

The University of Michigan has decided to extend the application deadline for undergraduate admission. But this decsion has sparked both anger and praise on an issue that is increasingly controversial as it comes under more scrutiny.

On the surface, this deadline extension is not a huge change. The University issued letters to students who had sent SAT or ACT test scores to the Undergraduate Admissions office without an application. These letters indicated to students that they should send their applications immediately, despite the deadline expiration. University admissions, believing that the tedious essay was the reason for the hold–up, would allow potential applicants to send their essays at an even later date.

Lisa Baker, Associate Vice President for University Relations, insists that the University "made the effort to reach out to top candidates of all races."

Yet one can hardly ignore the correlation between the decision, made by officials in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and a drop in minority applications of nearly 15 percent over the last year. After all, in its public commitment to diversity with such programs as the Michigan Mandate and the Michigan Agenda for Women, the University has always been of the opinion that affirmative action is a necessity in higher education. The conventional wisdom among the administration is that without affirmative action of some degree, minority students would not be given the fair opportunity that they deserve to utilize the University's educational opportunities. Yet an increasingly volatile debate has emerged, a debate which presents these very practices as harmful to the intent of education.

The future of affirmative action policies and the use of race–based preferences at the University of Michigan in admitting historically under–represented minorities remains a controversial issue that few care to debate openly and fairly. However, recent research conducted by Univer-

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FROM THE EDITOR

GREETINGS, READERS! THE past few weeks have brought us some interesting developments. Most notably, the Michigan Student Assembly (MSA) elections, where the rusty, corrupt political machine known as the Michigan Party had its tentacles dislodged from their grip on the Assembly by the Students' Party. The Students' Party captured several seats on the Assembly, as well as the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the Assembly, with Mike Nagrant and Olga Savic beating out current MSA VP Probir Mehta and MSA Rep. Dan Serota.

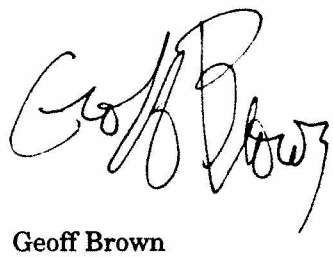
Mike and Olga certainly deserve congratulations for their accomplishments. However, as they prepare to take office, they must remember and remain true to the promises they made during the campaign. Most important is their pledge to make even more funding available for student groups. In addition to this, they should make available a ***detailed*** version of the budget for next year on the MSA World Wide Web Home Page as soon as the budget becomes available. This will give students information that they deserve to know, and will go a long way to making the Assembly accountable to its constituents.

MSA will also need to maintain heavy contact with the student population throughout the coming year, ensuring that the interests of all students — graduate and undergraduate — are addressed in the proper way.

If Mike and Olga and the other SP representatives can stay true to their campaign platform, then it will indeed be a welcome improvement for MSA and the student body as a whole. We will be watching closely, as will the entire campus. It is time for MSA to prove that it stands for student issues, and is genuinely interested in changing the image of the Assembly serving itself.

As always , we will be closely following the activities of MSA over the next year, and for the years to come. As you pick up new copies of the *Review*, you can rest assured that you are receiving in–depth coverage of MSA, as well as other campus issues. We hope you will stay with us, and that you'll find our coverage informative and interesting. If you would like to join us in our quest, then by all means, stop by one of our staff meetings. They are held on Tuesday nights at 7 pm, in our office, currently located in Room 32 of the Perry Building. We look forward to meeting you!!

Sincerely,



Geoff Brown
Editor–in–Chief

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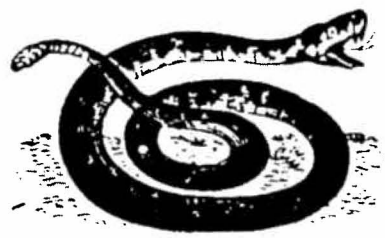
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❑ SERPENT'S TOOTH



Rumor has it that in order to placate the graduate students that are going to attempt to secede, there will be an Executive Officer position specially created for grad students. Oh goody! Now we can have a grad student Executive Officer that doesn't show up to meetings!

In an apparent response to the last issue, the U–M College Republican's homepage has improved. Now, upon entering the site, one is greeted by a rear view of Cornholio—sure, it's an still insulting, oafish thing to do, but fitting considering the asses the CR's are.

Reuters News Service recently reported that a study was conducted proving that children are more likely to watch programming with an adult or mature TV rating to it. It was not clear whether the evening news was included in this list.

Recently, we saw a copy of the *Daily* in which one individual interviewed claimed Tupac Shakur was not dead. Just what would this person need in the way of evidence?! Next thing, they'll be demanding an exhumation of the poor man.

Speaking of dead people, University Housing denied vehemently that the "Szechuan Tofu Stirfry" was part of the lethal concoction used by the Heaven's Gate cult in the recent mass suicide.

We'd like to congratulate Editor Emeritus Mohan Krishan on his graduation with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics. We'd also like to let him know he's been traded to the *Princeton Sentinel* for a laser printer and two copy editors to be named later. Congratulations, Mohan!

New MSA President Mike Nagrant is planning to get rid of the MSA water cooler. Other items reportedly for sale:

- Franklin Planner, $50
- Probir Mehta nameblock, 99¢
- Lifesize statue of Jon Winick, $1.50
- Dan Serota's poodle, Best Offer

In the *Michigan Daily*'s special "Weekend Etc." section on pornography, Editor in Chief Josh White proclaimed that the *Daily* devoted an entire section to porn "not because it can, but because it should." After reading it...we're bloody sure they did it because they could.

Recently, External Relation Committee chair Erin Carey claimed that driving to Washington, D.C. instead of flying was a cost-cutting measure. Now look, it's not a matter of how you get there—it's a matter of why go in the first place?

Recently, Fiona "Ex-MSA President" Rose advised new President Mike Nagrant, "Number one, always be honest with the press." Apparently left unsaid by our Fearless Leader was, "because getting caught lying really sucks."

Recently, *Review* Assistant Editor Lee Bockhorn was part of the Percussion Ensemble concert. We'd just like to say for the record that we've never seen a triangle fly that far out into the audience before.

When President Clinton fell while as a guest at Greg Norman's house, one must ask whether he was trying to sneak out the back entrance.

Question of the month: If Dole had injured his knee as a guest at Norman's house, how many points would he have lost in the polls?

We still can't understand why Josh White at the *Michigan Daily* refuses to answer our challenge. He could at least send us an e–mail that says "No." on it. What a pansy! Rumor has it that Josh feels that we would "make fun of him regardless" of whether the *Daily* won or lost, so he's sparing himself the grief. Apparently he has no idea of how much we're going to make fun of him for wussing out.

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❑ FROM SUITE ONE

Grad Student Secession Rash

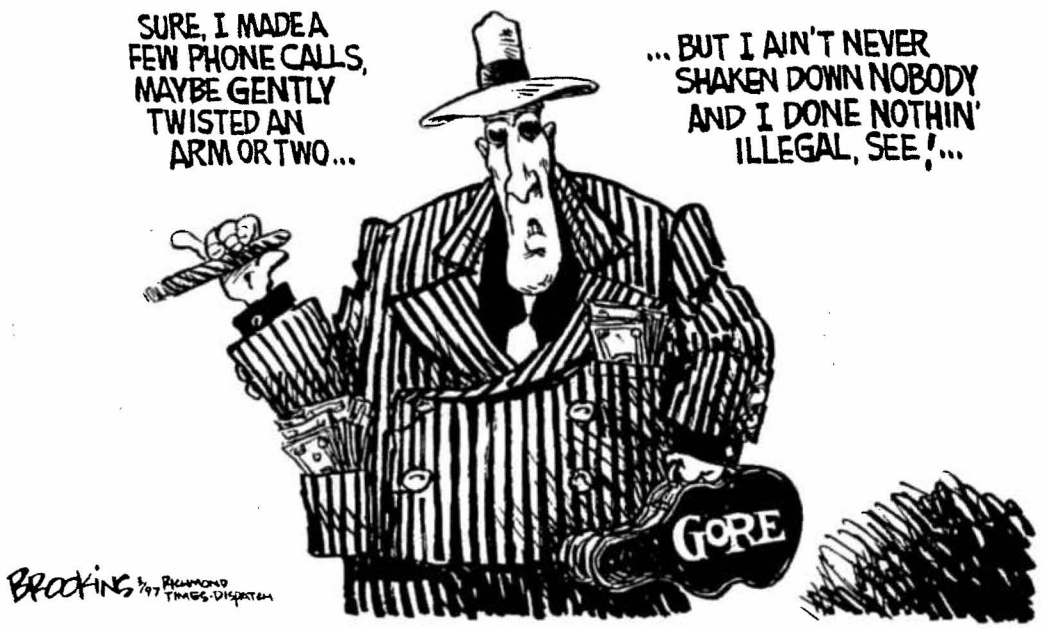
RECENTLY, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY'S graduate schools (Rackham, Public Policy, Public Health, Law, and Medicine) announced their intention to secede from the Michigan Student Assembly (MSA). Citing a perceived lack of interest for graduate student concerns within the mostly–undergraduate Assembly, the graduate students announced a series of referenda to be held by the individual school student governments during the coming weeks. If the referenda pass, and the Regents approve the secession, the graduate schools would form a new government known as the Council of Graduate and Professional Students (GaPS), and would take with them nearly $70,000 in student fees currently paid by graduate students to MSA. However, according to the GaPS proposal, not all ties with MSA would be severed, and the two governments would work together on issues that were common to both undergraduate and graduate students. Furthermore, under the terms of the proposal drafted by secession proponents, GaPS would accept an *ex officio* undergraduate member appointed by MSA to serve as a non–voting representative, and would reciprocate by sending an *ex officio* member of their own to MSA.

While it is understandable for graduate students to be concerned about how well their interests are represented, seceding from MSA will likely do them more harm than good. First of all, a divided student body will certainly not be able to adequately represent students. It is difficult enough for the Regents to accept MSA's position as the student voice without there being two groups, each claiming to be the voice of a subset of the student body.

Second, it is not clear that graduate student MSA representatives have been making sufficient attempts to adequately represent themselves on the Assembly. For example, there are currently eight seats available on the Assembly for members from the Rackham Graduate School; however, at the present time, only six of them are filled. Furthermore, graduate student members of MSA account for a disproportionately large number of the absences from MSA meetings. Also, the number of candidates for a given MSA election from the graduate schools is often small (many seats are uncontested) and in at least one instance, a representative from Rackham has been elected to the Assembly with two votes. This begs the question: why expect MSA to cater more to graduate student concerns if graduate students won't even take the time to ensure proper representation? The argument could be made, of course, that graduate students are simply fed up with making what they consider futile attempts at influencing Assembly opinions. However, to secede now, on the eve of a new leadership element within MSA, is surely a premature move.

Third, in light of the overwhelming support for graduate student TAs by a mostly undergraduate MSA last year, along with the implementation of child care supported by a mostly undergraduate student body — neither of these issues concern most undergraduate students by any stretch of the imagination — it is quite improper to maintain that MSA is ignorant of graduate student concerns. Indeed, it seems that the Assembly has, in the past, been quite concerned with graduate students. One would have to wonder exactly what concerns graduate students felt were being overlooked by MSA.

It is actually rather presumptuous of graduate students to maintain that undergraduates are not capable of understanding concerns of graduate students, or even to assert that there is a sufficient number of issues of sole concern to graduate students to warrant a separate student government. It is crucial that students work together to create one solid, substantial, and significant voice in order that the concerns of all students are heard by the administration and the Regents. By seceding from MSA, graduate students are threatening to undermine efforts of MSA to protect our interests, and represent us. The administration would absolutely love to see a divided student body, because they would then have even more reason to discount the student voice; if students cannot even agree on which stance to take, then the administration will have no reason to believe that there is an "official student position," and they would be quite correct. Rather than leaving MSA, graduate students should expend the rather considerable amount of time and energy that they have devoted to secession instead on actively filling their seats on MSA and working with each other ***and*** their undergraduate counterparts on MSA to ensure that all students, graduate and otherwise, are represented well on campus, in the administration, and to the Regents. Divided, we are only weaker — only if all students stand together can our voice ever have any chance of being heard. Rather than splitting MSA, graduate students could be a vital force in repairing the Assembly, and making it stronger. **MR**



❑ COMMENTARY

MSA Must Watch *Ex Officios*

WHEN THE STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN passed a controversial and ill–thought out ballot proposal to allow student groups with more than 400 members to send *ex officio* student members to MSA, they did so for two reasons: (1) they hoped to directly influence MSA as members of these student groups, or (2) they were so disgusted with the performance of MSA that they felt it would help if "real" student leaders were brought onto the Assembly.

However, the Rules and Elections Committee must be careful in their selection of just what groups are admitted to having these *ex officio* seats on the Assembly. Even if a group has over 400 student members, they must be a group that has legitimate concerns to be addressed by or at the Assembly. Second, the Rules and Elections Committee must have a strict interpretation of what a member is. The mere existence of 400 dues paying members in a social club or political group may in some cases only be facade — for example, the College Republicans signed up 147 members at their fall mass meeting. Now, the group has approximately 20 active members. Which number would count? And since this type of student attrition is a reality for almost every student group without an exception, MSA must be wary of groups who, amazingly, are able to get 400 members.

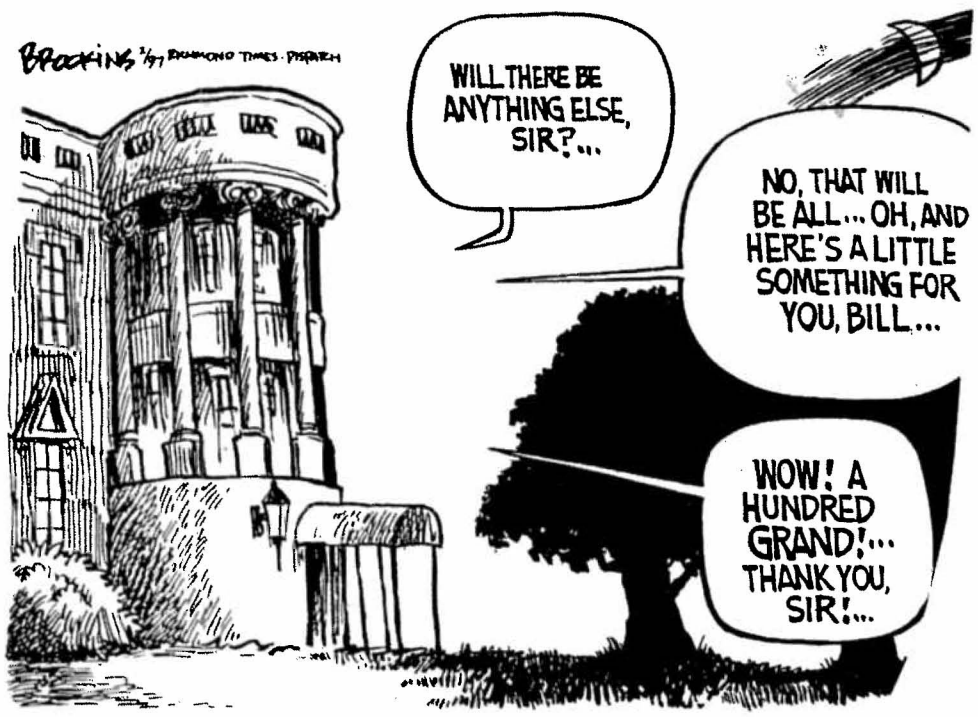
Furthermore, MSA must also not forget the concerns of the smaller student groups and the normal students they represent. Now that MSA and the voters have approved representation for campus versions of Washington's special interest groups, MSA must be wary at how these views are expressed by the *ex officio* members at hand.

And while the *ex officio* members of MSA provide solid ideas, MSA must make sure to continue to be an impartial decision maker and supporter of the average student. This is not to say that the *ex officio* members will not have merit; but the other concerns of students should be weighed with the same concern brought up by others.

Likewise, *ex officio* members of the Assembly must attempt to act in the most prudent of ways when dealing with their elected colleagues. *Ex officio* members must not abuse their positions, bully representatives, or otherwise strongarm the duly elected members of the Assembly. It would be very wise for the Rules and Elections Committee to implement standards of responsibility for those student groups who wish to have an *ex officio* member.

Hopefully, the passage of the Amendment will do what it was intended to do: namely, ensure that students will have more input on MSA. However, MSA must make sure to tread carefully. The current ambiguous standards relating to the conduct and selection of *ex officio* members of the Assembly could set and lead to an extremely unsettling situation in the future — where MSA might very well regret their decision to allow *ex officio* student members on the Assembly. **MR**

–Benjamin Kepple



❑ COMMENTARY

Lake Displays Weakness

ANTHONY LAKE'S RECENT WITHDRAWAL OF HIS NOMINATION as head of the Central Intelligence Agency has led to much Washington navel–gazing. In his withdrawal, Lake said that "Washington has gone haywire," indicating that partisan bickering in his nomination process had grown viciously bitter. Was Lake treated unfairly by the Senate?

Prominent Democrats think so. With alliterative flourish, Lake yearned for a time when Washington would "give priority to policy over partisanship, to governing over 'gotcha.'" Senator Bob Kerrey (D–Neb.) argued that with Lake's nomination, the Senate was "asking for something beyond what anybody's ever had before." On their account, evil Republicans kept Lake from getting a fair shake.

Some perspective on nominations is necessary. Most recent confirmation hearings slammed GOP nominees. Republicans were not the ones calling John Tower an alcoholic womanizer. It was not the GOP that tried to track video rentals of Robert Bork in attempting to derail his Supreme Court nomination. It was not the GOP who pushed for the tabloidesque Clarence Thomas hearings. If we want to look at the origins of vicious hearings, one need look to the left.

Of course, the Democrats have an answer to this ... *those* hearings revealed flaws in the nominees that the committee needed to evaluate the candidates. Unfortunately, these hearings did, too. If anything emerged during Lake's testimony, it was that serious problems dogged Lake's tenure at the National Security Council, and that these were potentially disqualifying.

First, Lake had problems in political ethics. Lake played a key role in the Administration's hypocritical position towards arming Bosnian Muslims. As President Clinton was chiding Republican efforts to end the arms embargo against the Bosnian Muslims, the Administration did not interfere with vast Iranian shipments of arms to the Muslims. Lake failed to inform Congress of this decision, a politically dishonest move which he later conceded was "a mistake." Lake was under fire for being lax in selling various energy stocks when he took his post at the NSC — that lapse cost him a $5,000 fine.

Further, serious questions of Lake's management ability emerged from current administration scandals. Though NSC staff knew of potential Chinese efforts to influence American elections, Lake was clueless. In the face of this, Lake refused to assign any blame. He also failed to communicate with Attorney General Janet Reno regarding the Clinton fund–raising fiasco. Given this record, even liberal pundit–in–chief Mark Shields conceded that there were "serious and legitimate doubts" about Lake's job fitness. Given the CIA's importance, such flawed management skills should be disqualifying.

Certainly, nominations have become vicious and partisan, and administrations of both parties had better learn to deal with it. However, when a nominee falls amidst serious concerns about the ability to do the job, then the nominee is the problem, not the process. **MR**

—Matthew Buckley

❑ FROM SUITE ONE

GOP: Stand Tough on Budget

LAST WEEK, HOUSE SPEAKER NEWT GINGRICH BOLDLY decided to place principle over politics and shelve GOP plans to pursue an immediate package of tax cuts in the ensuing budget battle with President Clinton. Gingrich, in a carefully–devised strategy to avoid another harmful government shutdown that nearly cost him his speakership, is certainly not willing to suffer another defeat by placing all of the Republicans' priorities into one budget proposal. Unfortunately, Clinton and the chairman of the National Economic Council Gene Sperling have shown virtually no enthusiasm for the Speaker's amicable concessions. However, Gingrich's diplomatic retreat has caused even greater losses as his fellow House Republicans have opposed the Speaker's concessions. Since many Washington pundits correctly allude to a growing apostacy within the GOP ranks, congressional Republicans must build a coalition of support around the Speaker if Clinton is to be justly forced to keep his quasi–conservative campaign promises.

Although Gingrich has maintained the support of Republican leaders in Congress, bringing Clinton's economic team to the negotiating table with a serious intent to balance the federal budget will require complete House Republican support. While Republicans are choosing to stick by their long–term goals of bringing immediate tax relief, a balanced budget amendment, and fewer government regulations to Americans, the Clinton administration has voiced only lukewarm support for the Speaker's concessions. "If having a separate vote on tax cuts turns out to be a means of getting a bipartisan balanced budget agreement, we're open to that," Sperling told the Associated Press last week. The President has said that he wants to get moving on a balanced budget agreement after Congress' Easter recess, but it is too early to say whether the two sides' latest talk on taxes will eventually lead to real progress on a budget agreement. Although achieving a balanced budget in seven years became the centerpiece of Clinton's re–election scheme, one should not expect the President to make a concerted effort to actively pursue this goal.

Already the President's agenda has turned toward pursuing mild, non–urgent matters. Whether or not the Speaker's decision to pursue a strategic retreat on immediate tax cuts will reap rewards in the future for the Republican Party has yet to be determined, but one thing is certain: the GOP will be unsuccessful in meeting its long term goals and in prodding President Clinton into addressing urgent public policy matters as long as the House members remain unsupportive to the Speaker's agenda. Republican Congressional Campaign Committee chairman Rep. Bill Paxon (R–NY), appearing on ABC's "This Week," seemed to convey an understanding of how dangerous party divisions could become. "We had a discussion about strategy and there was a little emotion, surprising for Republicans on that issue, but our goals are bedrock–solid," Paxon declared. But while House Republicans may be on the track toward support, other key GOP leaders have continued to shed a negative light over tense intra–party relations.

Jack Kemp, a probable Republican presidential candidate in 2000, remains critical of Gingrich's concessions, suggesting that he should not get "wobbly in the knees" on tax cut issues. Little does Kemp know that the harm done by this unnecessary criticism might ironically come back to haunt him as he is gearing up for the 2000 presidential race. With this week's Gallup polls showing the Speaker's approval ratings at a near all–time low and the President's at an astonishingly high rate of 59 percent in the face of numerous scandals, Clinton's economic team should have no problems in deciding to bypass a committed budget balancing effort in place of increased spending for various pet programs.

The course of action the congressional Republicans must take is simple. It is important that GOP members rally around the Speaker's efforts to strike a well–intentioned, bipartisan balanced budget agreement. Although Gingrich has made crucial mistakes in past budget negotiations, such as placing ambitious GOP priorities like Medicare and welfare reform into one budget proposal last year, the Speaker has learned important lessons from these strategic errors. If the Republicans agree to defer their targeted tax cuts in the interests of a balanced budget agreement, the ball will fall completely into the President's court. As Clinton tries to establish a defining mark of his presidency for the history books, he is left with little choice but to avoid risking a unilateral rejection of Republican attempts at bipartisanship. Should the Clinton administration persist in dragging its feet, then the Republicans must declare open season in pursuing their policy objectives. The Republican revolution of 1994 is still very much relevant. Only when Bill Clinton is allowed to slither through another budget showdown will the GOP face future problems. **MR**

Affirmative Action

Continued from Page 1

sity Professor of Philosophy Carl Cohen has unearthed compelling evidence of blatant racial discrimination of the highest proportions. Cohen's findings, when analyzed under a simple reading of the Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the binding decision in *Regents of Univ. of California v. Bakke* clearly demonstrate an illegitimate use of racial preferences in University admissions policies.

The equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, which reads as follows:

"No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of the citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

This establishes the fundamental restraint on racial discrimination in university admissions. The spirit of the Fourteenth Amendment is extended clearly within the language of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which states that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Together, these two statutes form the basis by which the legal system has adjudicated challenges to the use of affirmative action programs in higher education. The Supreme Court precedent for Affirmative Action cases was created in the 1978 *Bakke* decision. In the majority opinion, Justice Powell ruled that the University of California at Davis Medical School's program which allowed 16 minority students into its incoming class of 100 was illegal because non–white students could be admitted with grade point averages less than 2.5 while white candidates falling under this category would automatically be denied admission. Justice Powell's ruling provides a sobering challenge to the University of Michigan's current affirmative action policies and their results.

The equal treatment professed in considering the applications of prospective applicants to the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA), the Law School, and the Inteflex pre–medical program at the University contrasts markedly with the statistical evidence in recent admissions records. The disclaimer appearing in many official University publications, indeed very reflective and extensive of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, reads as follows:

"The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of non–discrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry...in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions."

However, various reports of admissions data obtained after a lengthy Freedom of Information Act inquiry by Professor Carl Cohen last year reveal a much different scenario.

Detailed tables of compiled enrollment data bearing a "Classified" label within various admissions documents from LSA, the Law School, and the Inteflex program demonstrate clearly the University's covert use of discrimination by race in making its admissions decisions to all three of these programs.

Admissions counselors for LSA refer to a table of directions which dictate how applications shall be reviewed and determined. For the first review, all applicants are divided into ninety academic categories or cells in a detailed table. On the vertical axis, each cell is delineated by the applicant's grade point average in earlier schooling, while the horizontal axis bears various groups of SAT and ACT scores. In each cell, two or three lines of code are written that indicate which response is to be made for all applicants on the first review. The top of the table bears the following instructions:

"In general, use the top row in each cell for majority applicants and the middle and bottom rows for underrepresented minorities and other disadvantaged students."

In ten cells in which GPA is 3.0 and above but SAT scores are below 1000, majority applicants are rejected, but minority applicants are accepted. In twenty–four cells in which earlier GPAs are below 2.7, majority applicants are rejected by counselors without further attention, while minority applicants, although not automatically admitted, are channeled for special processing. In nine mid–range cells in which GPA is somewhat above a 3.0 and SAT scores somewhat above 1090, minority applicants are accepted for admission, majority applicants are postponed for further review; i.e. placed on the "waitlist."

For applications for admission to the Integrated Premedical–Medical Program (Inteflex), pages 9 and 10 of the instructions document indicate the responses to be given for applicants to this highly competitive program. The highest category for admission is granted to non–minorities having an ACT score of 30+ or SAT scores of 1320+ and GPA of 3.8 (if out of state) and 3.6 (if in–state). However, for minority applicants, the highest category code for admission is an ACT score of 26+ or SAT scores of 1170+ and GPA of 3.4 for both in–state and out–of–state students.

The Law School shows similar patterns of blatant racial preference in its admissions practices. Citing 1995 data, among applicants with GPA 3.00–3.24 and LSAT 161+, Caucasian Americans had a 14.8 percent rate of acceptance while Mexican Americans held an astonishing 100 percent acceptance rate. Similarly, for applicants with GPA 3.25–3.49 and LSAT 161+, Caucasian Americans had a 7.4 percent rate of acceptance while Native Americans held a 100 percent acceptance rate.

The *Review* recently met with Professor Cohen to discuss the implications of these admissions policies. Professor Cohen, a founding member of the Residential College (RC) faculty, a former chair of the faculty senate, a member of the Washtenaw County branch of the ACLU, and a past member of the county's Democratic Party executive committee, remains one of the nation's foremost experts on affirmative action. He asserts that "I am a supporter of affirmative action. A lot of people think this means racial preferences. It is only when devices like these are used unfairly that I attack preferences by race. It is not the University's business to level the playing field, that's the business of the legislatures and the courts." Cohen cites Justice Powell's ruling in the *Bakke* case in challenging the University's denial of the use of quotas in its admissions practices. While University administrators profess their use of "goals" in admitting minority students, Powell writes that the use of quotas is a "semantic distinction [which] is besides the point: the special admissions program is undeniably a classification based on race and ethnic background." Cohen uses this passage as the pinnacle for his arguments that the University's practices conflict with the spirit of the *Bakke* ruling by using

See AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, Page 8

supplemental application (students must submit an ACT or SAT to be considered).

b. **For Non-Minorities, Students From High Population Michigan Counties, And Non-Residents:**

GPA2	AND	ACT/SAT1	LETTER BOX MARK-UP
3.6 instate 3.8 out-of-state		30+/1320+	AINT
3.6 instate 3.8 out-of-state		below 30/1320 but indicates new tests to be submitted by Jan. 10th deadline.	if admit, then YWB* or if PDTE, then RINT
3.6 instate 3.8 out-of-state		below 30/1320 and not retaking	RINT

*The You Write Back (YWB) letter should only be sent prior to December test dates. After this date the score will arrive too late to receive consideration. The YWB should be sent only after an admission letter; students delayed for March review will not receive further consideration and should be sent the RINT letter.

For underrepresented ethnic minorities, foreign students, or students from less populated Michigan counties see next page.

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COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS
GUIDELINES FOR ALL TERMS OF 1996
CONFIDENTIAL

c. **Minority Or Rural Criteria:**

For ALL Underrepresented Minority Students:

Also, for ANY student from Michigan counties EXCEPT Washtenaw, Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston, Ingham, Genesee, Saginaw, Midland, Bay, Muskegon, and Kent County:

3.4 instate & out-of-state	26+/1170+	AINT

d. **Foreign Students:**

No student on a temporary visa will be considered. A U.S. citizen or permanent resident who is attending school overseas may be considered. Students are required to come to Ann Arbor for an interview regardless of where they are currently living. Students who are required to take the TOEFL/MELAB must achieve a score in the 600 range.

Sample Documents used in Determining Admissions at the U–M

Students

Continued from page 1

on continuing to work on the online textbook reporting service, commencement speakers and activities, and making MSA more responsive to student needs."

Third place presidential candidate Pak Man Shuen of the URF said that "To be honest, the URF, although happy with the third place were unhappy with the amount of votes received."

Shuen remarked that the URF was relatively disappointed with their showing. "We were overly optimistic on turnout (we hoped for 30 percent and expected 20 percent) for we were naive enough to believe students actually had a desire to vote..."

While the Students' Party walked away with nine of the representative seats, four other parties also gained seats on the Assembly. The Michigan Party gained seven seats: four in LSA, one in Engineering, one in Business, and one in Law. The URF and the Voice each gained a seat in Rackham, while the Victors Party picked up a seat in Nursing. Independents did not fare nearly as well as they had last term, as only two — John Lopez and Jon Malkovich — won seats: however, Malkovich was the number one vote–getter in Engineering, whereas Lopez was able to win on a write-in campaign.

Many of the Students' Party representatives looked forward to working on the Assembly. Matt Curin, Pharmacy Representative, said that his goal was to "follow through with (his) campaign promises ... I'd like to be involved with the BPC (Budget Priorities Committee) again, I think I have a unique perspective to offer ... Besides BPC, I'd like to work on the Student Regent Task Force, and keep the idea alive. It's one of the most important things MSA is dealing with."

Current External Relations Committee (ERC) Chair Erin Carey, who successfully won re-election to MSA, agreed. "I would like to see us really move on the issues we talked about all spring .... The point is, we need to see concrete accomplishments."

Carey also hoped that she would be allowed to continue as ERC chair. "If chosen, I will continue to make ERC more efficient as far as money is concerned by continuing many of the same policies already in place, (such as) driving to Washington, D.C. instead of flying .... By concentrating a bit more on the levels of government that are closer to home, I hope to keep the budget down while remaining effective."

Trent Thompson, a Students' Party representative from LSA, wants to continue improving the image and effectiveness of the Assembly. "As far as the Assembly is concerned, I and the Students' Party feel that the way MSA currently deal with the Administration is unhealthy."

"Also, MSA's image is very poor; proof postive of this is that only 15 percent of the student population voted in this last election, which means that people do not care about what MSA does. This is something that I and the Students' Party not only intend to change, but will change ... It is not that I am so much worried about MSA's image in that I am more worried about how effectively we represent the students of Michigan, and our image reflects our effectiveness." Thompson also hoped that a coursepack store and improved ties with the Regents would emerge in the future.

Michigan Party representatives are also ready to work diligently on the Assembly with the Students' Party to improve the Assembly and the campus. Newly elected LSA representative Jason Korb remarked that "Some things I plan to tackle on MSA are campus safety and the homeless problem. As a transfer student, I know what a safe campus is [the one I left] and what an unsafe campus is."

"MSA is clearly a bureaucratic machine that has tremendous loopholes," Korb said. "MSA has the potential to be a much stronger force in students' lives, yet [MSA] must first clean up its' act."

Korb also said that he would work wholeheartedly with the Students' Party. "I don't believe in partisan politics and do not plan on playing them. If a member of the Students' Party proposes something that I agree with, then I will support that person 100%. This is still a student government, which means that we don't have to play Washington politics."

Current Michigan Party representative and Communications Chair Ryan D. Friedrichs also wishes to improve the Assembly. "Returning MSA to a concept of public service is a number one priority. If I remain Communications Chair I hope to expand many of the projects I worked on this semester."

"I am from Ann Arbor and have always seen the need for a student on City Council .... I would like MSA to find interested students and help them win a seat in the coming fall elections."

Friedrichs also expressed his interest in scrapping Maureen Hartford's Roundtable. The Roundtable is a discussion group of student leaders selected by Hartford, the Vice President for Student Affairs. "I want to work with Maureen Hartford to eliminate the need for her Student Roundtable. Currently the Roundtable is not elected, reported on, or accountable to anyone. It serves MSA's purpose as a representative body to the Administration. The new *ex officio* positions [on the Assembly] may help this happen. Fundamentally, I want MSA to be a visible, service–oriented body, which inspires and helps students get involved on campus."

Anthony King, URF Rackham representative to MSA, forcefully expressed his wish to improve the effectiveness of MSA and improving relations with students. "The most pressing issue is the apathy toward MSA amongst the student body, [as is] demonstrated [by] the disgraceful turnout in every election in recent history. It is necessary to build interest in the MSA by tackling issues students [care] about, with topics such as affirmative action and school fees. In addition, I would gallantly defend the MSA from any attempts of Rackham secession."

Rackham secession is just one of the many issues facing the Students' Party as they finish their revolution and start the much more difficult task of implementing positive change. Time will tell whether they are indeed successful in this goal. However, it appears that their goal of working with a cooperative Assembly is near completeion. **MR**

MSA ELECTION RESULTS

MSA PRESIDENTIAL RACE

STUDENTS PARTY	**MIKE NAGRANT— OLGA SAVIC**	**1599**
Michigan Party	Probir Mehta—Dan Serota	1292
United Rebels Front	Pak Man Shuen—Stuart Krein	323
Voice for Black Freedom...	Jessica Curtin—Nikita Little	273
The Victors Party	Jim Riske—Craig Myles	149
POKE Party	James Smith—Matthew Tomback	95
The Liberty Party	Martin Howrylak—Elizabeth Keslacy	83

MSA REPRESENTATIVE RACE (LSA)

	(Points)	
Diana Economy	3662	Students Party
Ryan Friedrichs	3354	Michigan Party
Erin Carey	3282	Students Party
Rebecca Rosenthal	3264	Michigan Party
Rich Kovacik	3209	Students Party
Mehul Madia	3158	Michigan Party
Trent Thompson	3049	Students Party
Rachel Schlenker	2946	Students Party
Jason Korb	2785	Michigan Party

MSA REPRESENTATIVE RACE (ENGINEERING)

Jon Malkovich	381	Independent
Neel Chokshi	326	Michigan Party

MSA REPRESENTATIVE RACE (BUSINESS)

Ryan Kelly	77	Students Party
Irfan Murtuza	51	Michigan Party

MSA REPRESENTATIVE RACE (RACKHAM)

Ray Robb	424	Students Party
Tamyra Rhodes	319	Voice Slate
Anthony King	270	United Rebels Front
John Lopez	106	(write–in) Independent

BALLOT PROPOSALS

1. $5.50 increase per term to fund Student Regent drive
FAILED
1134 YES, 2497 NO

2. Should the rule limiting GSIs to teaching 10 terms be rescinded?
PASSED
2126 YES, 1463 NO

3. Amendment regarding Ex-Officio members on the MSA
PASSED by 60%
SUPERMAJORITY
(by a margin of 8 votes)
2345 YES, 1533 NO

4. Community Service Fee $1/term for Student Groups dealing with Service
PASSED
2373 YES, 2222 NO

MSA REPRESENTATIVE RACE (SMALL SCHOOLS)

Stephanie Windish, Nursing, VP
Genna Solomon, Art, MP
Karen Fauman, Medicine, MP
Scott Sifton, Law, MP
Matt Curin, Pharmacy, SP
Karie Morgan, SNRE, SP

(VP = Victors Party, MP = Mich. Party, SP = Students Party)

Affirmative Action

Continued from Page 1

preferences by race.

When Cohen was asked about the use of affirmative action programs for compensation of past inequality, he replied that "if the objective is to compensate for past inequality, there must be a formal finding and determination of past inequality. The University is not a court, and is not competent to make that distinction." Indeed, Professor Cohen's observation resembles Justice Powell's analysis of the compensation argument. Powell writes that "[the] white majority is itself composed of various minority groups, most of which can lay claim to a history of prior discrimination at the hands of the state and private individuals. Not all of these groups can receive preferential treatment." Extending this clever observation to his earlier argument for the basis of equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment, Powell notes that "the guarantee of equal protection cannot mean one thing when applied to one individual and something else when applied to a person of another color." The University's practices become increasingly questionable when viewed in this light.

Cohen further argues that giving preferences by race creates a vicious cycle of discrimination. "To give by race is to take by race when the goods are in short supply," he states. "The white majority doesn't pay, but certain individuals [do]. We don't know their names. They are the ones who would have otherwise gotten into a university but didn't because of racial discrimination," he adds.

Turning to the issue of the University's recent decision to extend the application deadline, Professor Cohen remarked that "if they want to extend the application deadline, fine. But they should not be discriminating by race."

Evan Knott is an LSA sophomore majoring in political science, and the Campus Affairs Editor of the Review. *Maureen Sirhal is an LSA junior majoring in political science, and a staff writer for the* Review.

While many students have expressed their satisfaction with the decision, others continue to protest affirmative action policies in ignorance of the truth. David Burden, an engineering representative to the Michigan Student Assembly, offered a resolution last fall to adopt a lobbying position opposing affirmative action policies. Burden says he favors an affirmative action policy that looks at need as opposed to race. "My goal wasn't to have [the legislation] pass. I wanted to spark discussion about [affirmative action]."

His approach mirrored that of the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI), or Proposition 209. CCRI is an initiative that says:

"the state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting."

Interestingly, the wording of Proposition 209 bears a striking resemblance to the wording of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the only change being the addition of the words "grant preferential treatment" to the proposal. Unfortunately, the majority of university students are unaware or misinformed about statutes like Proposition 209. Although this simple, non–discriminatory proposal advocates a just and color–blind policy in selecting candidates for various positions, militant liberal groups like Californians for Justice and the Ecumenical Peace Institute have succeeded in completely distorting and obscuring the truth of Proposition 209 by bringing in former Ku Klux Klan wizard David Duke to defend the proposal before the elections. This scheme to brand Proposition 209 with racist connotations was conducted against the vehement but fruitless efforts of CCRI chairman Ward Connerly, who is black. When the debate over affirmative action programs becomes so tilted in favor of the program's supporters, it is hardly any wonder that no concerted effort has begun to challenge the University's recent extension of the application deadline to certain races.

In passing such a measure, admission counselors and administrators seek to halt the downward trend of minority applicants. But what is vastly ignored is the decline of minority applicants everywhere. Other major universities such as the University of California at Berkeley and Ivy League institutions have experienced a similar decrease. The reason? Money is a likely culprit. In–state minority applicants remain stable; however, out–of state applicants must be won back by the University. But with such stiff competition, especially from Ivy League universities, the University will have to work harder than ever in creating and maintaining a real program for minority recruitment. Such a program must not select a new and diverse body of students only by distinguishing the color of its members' skin. Rather, a much more ambitious diversity recruitment effort would compete for top students from all walks of life early in the admissions process so as to mitigate potential enrollment crises in the future.

University President Lee Bollinger was recently quoted in *The Michigan Daily* defending Michigan's affirmative action policies. "Having students and faculty from diverse backgrounds, representing a wide range of perspectives and talents, is critically important not only for instilling a positive sense of community within and beyond the University, but also for creating the most vital intellectual and educational atmosphere," Bollinger said. "Racial and ethnic diversity is a critical component of this broader goal."

But is this the only component? Diversity need not be limited only to one's skin color. The knowledge and perspectives available from an underprivileged, gifted white male who grew up on an isolated farm might be more valuable to the University community than an affluent, private school–educated Indian woman who lived her entire life in a predominantly white suburb. Yet, the current affirmative action system would most likely give special preference to the privileged Indian girl for no other reason than her skin color meets the University's false definition of diversity.

Clearly, the University's admissions offices have a long way to go in improving their recruitment efforts to ensure fair and impartial access to the University's highly coveted educational opportunities. **MR**

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LSA-SG RESULTS

The LSA–SG race was quite close this year, with Students' Party candidates Lauren Shubow and Geeta Bhatia edging out Michigan Party candidates Adam Schlifke and Yejide Peters by a mere 27 votes. In all, 16 students gained seats on LSA–SG: the first 9 in the list below gained their seats by election, while candidates 10 through 16 did not do well enough to earn election but were appointed to fill empty seats on the Assembly.

CANDIDATE	VOTES	POINTS
Rupa Patel	839	5210
Gina Lee	789	3904
Gregg Lanier	637	3713
David Silver	676	3705
Gary Zhao	607	3559
J. Herberger	613	3528
Jeremy Bloom	652	3452
Patrick Ryan	622	3443
Jennifer Qussar	611	3382
Ronak Shah	617	3317
Sanjeev Krishnan	592	3307
Makaiya Brown	613	3256
Alan Reifler	579	3085
Dedra Miles	573	2856
Sarah Osmer	451	2709
C. A. Guice	554	2706

LSA–SG PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Shubow/Bhatia	930
Schlifke/Peters	907

Grads Attempt Secession From MSA

BY BENJAMIN KEPPLE

A STORM OF CONTROversy has been brewing ever since representatives from the schools of Law, Medicine, Public Health, Rackham, and Social Work, announced their intention to secede from the Michigan Student Assembly (MSA) and form a new student government for graduate and professional students. The new student government, the Council of Graduate and Professional Students (GaPS), would ostensibly deal with graduate students' interests and concerns in a more efficient manner than they currently are being dealt with by MSA. The new student government would be funded by the student fees of graduate students — removing $70,000 from the MSA budget and placing the money under the control of GaPS.

Ultimately, the graduate student leaders stated, "We have not reached this decision lightly. We base this on one simple fact: graduate students are different. We have concerns and interests that distinguish us from undergraduates in the University of Michigan community."

The leaders of the graduate schools demanding secession gave several reasons for their decision. Many of these reasons dealt exclusively with the waste, inefficiency, and poor judgment these graduates feel is rampant throughout MSA.

• "Undergraduates feel that spending $75,000 of student fee money on internal student government operations and salaries, and another $7,000 on lobby efforts is normal and acceptable ... Graduate students can spend the $70,000 we contribute in student fees effectively and efficiently ..."

According to John Lopez, the outgoing Rackham Student Government (RSG) co-president, MSA representative, and one of the signers of the graduates' Declaration of Independence, "We anticipate that of the roughly $70,000 GaPS would recover, only $5,000 would be used for internal office expenses ... the $70,000 (also) includes the money which goes to the Child Care scholarships which MSA passed last year ... we intend to continue funding those scholarships as a number of grad students are the student-parent recipients of these. The rest (of the money) would be allocated back to student groups."

The secession document stated that "GaPS would return almost twice as much money to student groups than under the current system." According to Lopez, elimination of much of an internal bureaucracy that currently exists in MSA would allow GaPS to make this a possibility.

Outgoing Rackham Student Government co-President Sarah-Marie Belcastro, also a signer of the secession document, remarked that "I wish I knew what MSA does that they [would need] to spend $100,000 on internal stuff! My personal opinion is that [GaPS] may not even need to use all of the money we get from fees."

Belcastro also said when asked whether GaPS would lobby outside of the University, "Gee. Rackham has never spent money to lobby. We've just written lots of letters when we're concerned with extra-university stuff..."

• "Graduate students do not feel represented in the (MSA) as less than 2% of all graduate students voted last fall."

This statement, along with the financial concerns raised by the possible creation of a new student government, has prompted the most debate between undergraduates and graduates. Current MSA representative Andy Schor argued that "Graduate students are not represented on MSA because they choose not to be. I have been on MSA for 2 years and I have yet to see every Rackham seat filled at an MSA meeting. On average, two of their seats are filled. They have about six seats."

Schor also stated that "MSA absolutely does work on grad issues. They passed Child Care, (they) are currently working on Health Care, and have involved Grad students in the production of ADVICE. Grad students also sit as the (Budget Priorities Committee) vice-chair and the Rules and Elections Chair. This means that two of the three reps that show up are leaders of committees."

Lopez countered with the following statement: "... graduate students simply do not have the time to fulfill all of MSA's obligations. As we all know, MSA's weekly meetings tend to run long, often times devolving into arguments over points of procedure, debates on which word works better in a resolution or code change, etc. ...Thus, many MSA graduate representatives have resigned in frustration or decided not to run again, such as Diana Corwin Aguilar, Maureen Comfort, Doug Friedman, Amy Lounds, (and) John Roman ..."

Lopez also stated that "In fact, MSA and those running for MSA often misrepresent graduate student issues ..." and that graduate concerns are generally not addressed in the Assembly.

"The documents clearly showed that MSA addressed the issues of child care and health care. But these two concerns are not the sole issues of importance to graduate students ... other graduate student concerns include residency requirements, family housing, departmental funding and governance ... issues that are not raised in MSA."

MSA Vice–President Olga Savic said that she and President Mike Nagrant "would like to see [the graduates] stay." Savic mentioned that issues that were addressed by the graduate students are not being addressed by the graduate representatives in the Assembly. She also said that graduates and undergraduates had a lot of "common ground" that would be best served by one body. "A unified student government is the best student government. Although MSA has a lot of kinks and a lot of problems, we can work those problems out."

Savic mentioned that the conflict is an issue of money. "It really comes down to an issue of money. No one wants to lose control over the money they see as rightfully theirs."

For it is also unclear how each student government shall be affected by the fee changes. While GaPS would start out with a budget of approximately $70,000, this would come from the MSA budget. Current MSA Engineering representative David Burden argued regarding GaPS student group funding that "if your plan is for GaPS to have groups register with MSA for a Student Organizations Accounts Services (SOAS) account and then fund them yourselves, I'd demand that we charge your government for the use of our office resources to register graduate groups. You can't just say that our office expenditures are excessive and then mooch off them."

Presumably, other programs that serve graduate students might also fall under the ax if undergraduates refuse to pay for the graduates' disproportionate share of those programs.

Savic said that GaPS might find more start up costs than they anticipated, for instance, if the Regents demand that GaPS have an accountant on-staff. Currently, the cost for an accountant and auditing runs MSA around $20,000 per year.

Savic also said that losing the $70,000 currently contributed by the graduate students would put a dent into proposed increases to the BPC. Student government funding would not be cut if the graduate students left, because of a $1/term increase directly to UM.Serve and the BPC each. However, if the graduates left, it would amount to "monies being cut then replaced" by MSA.

Savic said that she hoped the graduates would not secede, as that would allow the BPC to dramatically increase funding to student groups. With 702 student groups on campus at last count, Savic said that she "hoped the money would ameliorate the burden" on many student groups.

GaPS would be differently constructed than MSA. Due to the smaller nature of GaPS, there would be an as-yet undetermined slate of Executive Officers plus a Student Judiciary, along with a currently undetermined number of representatives elected to GaPS by the students of each school. It is also quite likely, although as yet undetermined, that there would be a far smaller number of committees on GaPS than currently exist on MSA.

In order for the GaPS to become a reality, the students of each graduate school that would be represented in the GaPS would have to pass a referendum endorsing secession from MSA. Law, Public Health, Rackham, and Social Work have tentatively set their dates for the referendum during the week of April 7, whereas the Medical School will have their referendum at the end of April to coincide with Medical School Council elections.

The referendum would consist of three questions:

"1. Should the graduate and professional students withdraw from MSA and form a new graduate student government?

2. Should the money currently given to MSA through student fees be reallocated to the new graduate student government?

3. Should the constitution for the new graduate student government be approved?"

Assuming all five schools approve the referendum, the "provisional GaPS leaders" will take the measure to Vice President for Student Affairs Maureen Hartford, asking that it be placed on the agenda of the June meeting of the Regents of the Unversity.

The Regents must approve any fee changes relating to the Michigan Student Assembly. If the Regents do in fact approve the creation of GaPS and the resultant fee changes, many graduate student leaders are confident that GaPS could begin operating as soon as September, with the groundwork for GaPS being placed through this summer.

The graduate students proposing secession, however, do not want to break off relations entirely with MSA. "It is not our intent to deny them or to refuse to work with undergraduates when we can achieve results in our joint interest. In fact, we would like to keep a strong liasion with (MSA) for this important reason. But, ultimately, graduate students are different."

How different they are will best be judged by the results of the referenda being held by each of the five graduate schools during April. MR

❑ ROLL UP FOR THE MYSTERY TOUR

Slacking Toward Greatness

BY GEOFF BROWN



Geoff Brown: The man, the myth, the slacker

HOWDY! WELCOME to another fun–filled excursion into the center of my mind. Or something. First of all, I'd like to congratulate Mike and Olga on winning the presidency of MSA, and also to bid a fond farewell to Fiona and the Funk Lord. It was fun, to be sure. Fiona, indeed, had her own farewell messages, including helpful hints for her successor. "Always tell the truth to the press," was one of those little hints. Having interviewed her myself, and knowing firsthand what may have motivated her to say that, I cannot help but wonder if this is a case of "do as I say, don't do as I do," or one of "God, did I ever learn that the hard way!"

But enough of that. Soon, the workings of MSA will mean little to me, as I prepare to take my leave of the University forever and ever (or until next fall, depending on how the Admissions Committee of the School of Public Health decides to respond to my application) in not much more than a month. Having finished all of the degree requirements in Biology, and needing only six credits to graduate, it would not take an incredibly big leap of faith to believe that I have a monster case of senioritis. Senioritis, of course, is derived from the two Latin words *Senioria*, which means "Someone who is nearing the completion of their coursework," and *Itis*, which means "Who doesn't really give a shit, and hence slacks off to the point wherein Kato Kaelin seems productive." Well, okay, perhaps I am exaggerating a bit (I mean, how little would one have to do in order to make Kato Kaelin seem useful?) but there is definitely a marked difference in my mindset toward things academic. It hasn't always been like this. For instance:

FRESHMAN (OR FRESHTHINGY, WHATEVER) YEAR, SEMESTER ONE

My weekday schedule went something like this:

• **7:30 AM.** Wake up, stumble towards shower (I never was much of a morning person).

• **8:30 AM.** Go off to Organic Chemistry Class, bringing one can of Coke to drink.
• **9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.** Classes (well, okay, it wasn't solid classes, but I went to all of them).
• **ANY TIME I WASN'T EATING, IN CLASS, OR TALKING TO ROOMMATES.** Studying, mostly for Organic Chem.
• **MIDNIGHT, OR SO.** Go to sleep.

Then it evolved to:

• **4:30 AM.** Go to sleep.
• **8:45 AM.** Wake up, pull on some clothes and sprint (sort of) to Organic Chem, bringing two cans of Coke in the futile hope that there is enough caffeine contained therein to keep me somewhat conscious for the majority of lecture (HINT TO UNDERCLASSMEN: There isn't).
• **ANY TIME I WASN'T EATING, IN CLASS, SLEEPING, ON THE INTERNET, TALKING TO ROOMMATES AND FRIENDS, OR PLAYING "X–WING" ON MY ROOMMATE MATT'S COMPUTER.** Frantically study for Organic Chem. Take exam. Do somewhat badly (though still better than lots of my classmates). Wonder why I understood it up until I needed to display my understanding on an exam. Wonder why I needed Calc II to be a Bio major. Wonder how many more French classes I could skip without failing. Look forward to playing more "X–Wing" (By the way, Matt Gedris, if you're still out there, do you still have my game saved? I was ***that*** close to beating the Death Star!).

By second semester, I had pretty much normalized my schedule to the following:

• **GET UP.**
• **GO TO CLASSES.**
• **GO TO MORE CLASSES.**
• **STUDY, DO HOMEWORK, PAPERS, ETC.**
• **EMAIL.**
• **HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS.**
• **SLEEP A LITTLE BIT.**
• **REPEAT.**

And so it remained for the next couple years, with some modifications, and additions of things like joining the *Review*, becoming the head Trek geek; acquiring a couple of girlfriends who then went on to absolutely, callously toss me aside, prompting me to consider a career in a monastery somewhere (not that I'm bitter); becoming the editor of the *Review* (which requires far too much time to be a really dedicated slacker) etc. And then came:

SECOND SEMESTER OF SENIOR YEAR

[CUE OMINOUS MUSIC FROM *INDEPENDENCE DAY*, WHERE THEY'RE GETTING READY TO VAPORIZE THE WHITE HOUSE].

This is that fun time where you get your senior audit back and realize that as long as you go to a good chunk of your classes, and don't screw up too badly in any of them, you can kinda lay off the schedule a bit. (Of course, for the benefit of those of you readers who may happen to be my professors, I'm actually as diligent a student as ever. Really.). Here's a look at my typical day now:

On a particularly ambitious day:

• **WAKE UP AT 8:50 AM.** Head toward class.
• **ARRIVE AT MY 9:00 AM PSYCH LECTURE.** Take notes, etc.
• **GO TO CLASS FOR A COUPLE MORE HOURS.** Maybe.
• **GO HOME.**
• **TAKE A NAP.** Those three hours of class can be grueling.
• **WAKE UP AND REALIZE THAT THERE IS HOMEWORK AND STUDYING TO BE DONE.** Take note of this fact. Exhausted, proceed to:
• **TAKE ANOTHER NAP.**
• **STAGGER TO THE REVIEW OFFICE.** Look through junk mail, stack the bills on Lisa's desk, take a nap on the couch in the office while pretending to hold "office hours."
• **GO HOME.**
• **EAT SOMETHING.** Perhaps.
• **SURF THE NET.**
• **WATCH "THE TICK."**
• **GO TO SLEEP AT THREE AM.**

On some of my less–than–ambitious days, my schedule resembles something like the following:

• **WAKE UP.** Sort of.
• **WATCH TV.**
• **TAKE A NAP.**
• **STAGGER GROGGILY TO 4 PM CLASS.**
• **GO HOME.**
• **TAKE A NAP.**
• **GO TO SOME RANDOM MEETING.**
• **GO HOME.**
• **TAKE A NAP.**
• **TALK TO MY ROOMMATE HOWIE, WHO MAKES ME LOOK LIKE A PARAGON OF EFFICIENCY, AND IS INDEED A SLACKER EXTRAORDINAIRE.** We enjoy these conversations, because it gives us reasons for not doing things we should have been doing. Howie's my idol, because somehow he gets his work done anyway.
• **WATCH "THE TICK," AND "THE CRITIC."** Generally with Howie, who is, for the most part, "just taking a break before starting my paper."
• **GO TO SLEEP.**

As you can see, my life is just a whirlwind of activity. Somehow I manage to keep busy, though, and get all of my work done in reasonably good fashion. Procrastination becomes an art form, and you will find that your work suffers horribly if you actually take ample time to complete it. "If you want to do something well, leave yourself as little time as humanly possible to do it," I always say. Well, I'll have to enjoy it while it lasts. Next year, I'll either be a graduate student, which is kind of like freshman year all over again, except you don't have any chance to screw up, so you'd better damned well work hard, or I'll be "gainfully" employed somewhere, so long as it's not in the corporate world. I decided that corporate–ladder climbing was not for me when my dad, an automotive executive/engineer type scoffed at me because I was "only working 40 hours a week." Of course, this is understandable inasmuch as my dad spends 40 hours per week just reading corporate memos and stuff. Of course, in rejecting the corporate lifestyle, I eventually chose a career (medicine) which requires many more than 40 hours per week (like 80 or 100), at least for many years. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if I ended up working 40–hour workdays. But at least I'll get to scoff at my dad for, "only working 60 or 70 hours per week." Well, assuming I have enough time off.

In the meantime, then, I intend to enjoy the final weeks of my undergraduate career as much as possible. I have the rest of my life to be responsible, and to not do stupid and/or dangerous things. I'm going to go out, and take life by the horns (or something), experience new things, find new ways to eschew academic obligations, meet interesting new people, and live life to its fullest. Now if you'll please excuse me, I am way overdue for my nap. MR

Geoff Brown is a n LSA senior majoring in biology, and the Editor–in–Chief of the Review. *Email him at gmbrown@umich.edu and he'll respond when he wakes up.*

❑ LOST IN THE EIGHTIES™

Academia Nuts, (or Ben Attacks the Ivory Tower)

BY BENJAMIN KEPPLE

WELL, CITIZEN, WELcome to the University of Michigan. Look upon its lofty towers of ivory! Look upon its ivy covered walls! Look upon the mighty University, and despair! In the span of four short years, this sick monstrosity, this aberrant mutation of what used to be a pinnacle in the world of higher education, will do its best to crush you into a mindless, politically correct automaton! Watch as the mad academics and the crazed bureaucrats throw Western culture to the winds and cram postmodern, politically correct, revisionist lies down your throat and pass it off as Truth. Watch and despair, because this is what the University will give you. You came for an education – well, you're going to get one, friend, whether you bloody well like it or not."

Don't you wish you could replace those hypocritical sellouts who masquerade as helpful students during Campus Day? Then, with the robot–student removed, actually lead a prospective group of students around the University of Michigan, to show them what it is really like? I wish that I could, just once, during my time here. There's so much that prospective students don't know until it is too late, and there is so much that they need to know. I have heard a lot of utter nonsense spew out of the throats of Campus Day Tour Guides as I pass them by on my way to class. "Here, the Shapiro Library serves as an important resource for students." "Entree Plus is a useful service." "The *Daily* is a forum for students on campus." This can no longer be allowed to continue without some complaint. But it is rather telling that they do not advertise the information about what actually goes on inside these buildings. Were you ever told about the wonderous programs of revisionism when you had your tour of the History Department? No, you were not. For this University does not tell the truth about what goes on in our basic classes around here. One could almost call this evil, but good and evil are forgotten concepts on this, The Campus of Tomorrow. Of course, another forgotten concept around here (forgotten by administrators) is that *people* come to *a University* to *learn*, not to be force–fed trendy academic nonsense or propaganda designed by annoying leftists. *Yes, leftists.*

In 1927, the great newspaper columnist H.L. Mencken wrote the following about higher education in America: "... the learning on tap in them is mainly formal and bogus — that it consists almost wholly of feeble nonsense out of textbooks, put together by men who are unable either to write or to think. And (the student) must discover anon that its embellishment by the faculty is almost as bad — that very few college instructors, as he encounters them in practice, actually know anything worth knowing about the subjects they presume to teach." He wryly figures that the only thing many come away from college with is a cynical mindset. My God, you would have thought he was talking about college today, the way he wrote. Can you imagine what he would have written if the colleges were at today's level back in 1927?

You would think that in seventy years we would have changed this state of affairs. Now, it is far worse. At least back in The Old Days, they taught a reasonable humanities curriculum. The students of yesteryear learned the classics, they learned *actual* history, they learned logic and reason, and they learned them from the basic level up. While they did not have the opportunity to take some courses as we have today, there was most certainly none of the revisionist curriculum that nowadays passes for truth. For the most part, they learned what would help them in the real world. Not so today! No, actually teaching worthwhile subjects and worthwhile topics in class appears to be simply too much for the majority of academics nowadays. It also appears that whenever worthwhile courses are taught by renowned and competent instructors, the classes are sabotaged by administrators whose brains are filled with harebrained schemes and plots. Our classes, especially our basic classes at the most introductory levels, are increasingly subject to the whims of mad instructors who did their doctoral thesis on "Potholders in the American West: White Racism at Work" and who have a burning desire to indoctrinate, indoctrinate, indoctrinate.

I'm bloody sick of it. I walk out of my history classes, and I want to vomit. There is more to the First World War than gender issues! There is more to the atomic bombing of Japan than racism! There is more to the Weimar Republic than Dada art! Would the teachers of the American history survey courses *please* mention the accomplishments of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln, or is that too much for them? Would the teachers of the Modern European history survey course *please* mention the Battle of the Somme, or Ypres, or spend more than 10 minutes looking at British politics? I'd really love to know how they justify their current teaching. I would love a rationale, or a defense, for the inexcusably poor choice of subject matter in the **survey courses** regarding modern American and European history, because quite frankly, I and everyone else I have known who has taken these courses, didn't learn a *damn* thing from them. No, scratch that. We learned that white males, especially the British, were/are evil.

I love the English department as well. Every freshman has taken the hell that is English 124/5, to fulfill our Introductory Composition requirement. You all know how bad it was. It was somewhat like a British prep school, say Eton, where the larger students (grads) routinely beat upon the smaller ones (undergrads) and did so as if it was their God–given right. Its like a bloody rite of passage around here. Remember the nauseating reading you had to do? Remember the ~~TA GSI~~ professor's indentured servant that went bonkers whenever some poor sap used "he" (instead of "s/he") as the gender neutral pronoun? Is writing being taught here? NO! Very few students ever came out of an Introductory Composition class knowing how to write better! Most came out with an intense dislike for the English department! One student, an LSA psychology junior who shall remain anonymous, remarked, "I learned the grading system was unfair, that working hard often is no indicator of how successful one will be in the course, and olive loaf is awful on rye bread." I'm willing to bet the lot of you had similar experiences. Instead of having a grammar text thrown at your head and drilling you with frequent writing assignments, you wrote four or five papers and learned about the wonders of European imperialism, with added "discussion." Or even worse, you would write about film. Why are we not working on improving writing the way it is done in English 225 or 325? We're only doing 1/4 or 1/8th of the job we should and could do in these courses.

Critics reading this will no doubt scoff, "Kepple, you're being an insensitive clod! What about diversity? What about diversity? What about diver..."

I know that I may come off as sounding like I want to return the paradigm of the 1950s to the higher education system. This is not what I mean. There is probably a time and a place for gender issues and Dada art and what not. However, they aren't worthy of major discussion in a survey course. If you are taking an art survey about European art, Dada art probably should get a mention. Such minute and specialized topics are worthy indeed for a seminar or a class where the *student knows what he is getting into*, not a survey class where a student is supposed to learn about Europe from 1600–1945. Teach those topics in History at a 300, 400, or 500 level course level instead of History 111.

For we have to be realistic about the coursework that we take here. An Engineering student taking a basic history course is taking it because he wants to learn history. A Business student taking a basic English course is taking it because he wants to learn literature or improve his writing skills. 99 percent of the time he is not going to want to learn about masculinity and deconstructionist theory, or the writings of Tadzhikistanis forced to live under the boot of Communist Russia. In reality, out in the cold cruel world, these things will not help him. And let us remember that when one comes into college, one is usually expected to leave it as well with a helpful, sound education. Your employer will be impressed if you know Shakespeare and American history. He will not be impressed if you babble revisionist claptrap about the 1960s or came out of college with the amazing ability to recite the complete works of Angela Davis from memory. Keep the basics in the basic courses; let the specialists deal with the special topics. Whether certain departments should be given "concentration" status or not is a different subject; whether certain courses should be offered is a different subject. We can debate *that* later. What we need to focus on when we create syllabi and course reading lists is not what is trendy or what is politically correct, but what will really help the students taking the course at a basic level. When we do this, the students taking the courses shall benefit, in sunshine or in shadow, and buddy, you'll come out of this place with a real, truly liberal education after all. MR

Benjamin Kepple is the Managing Editor of the Review *and steadfastly refuses to write his History 366 paper on masculinity or femininity. E-mail this backward schmuck at bjkepple@umich.edu*

Ever thought to yourself, "Ben sure is a funny guy who I'd like to work with?"
We never have either. But you can join the Review. E-mail us at mrev@umich.edu for more details.

❑ NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Campaign Finance Scandals Mount

BY MATTHEW BUCKLEY

WITH ALL THE RECENT focus on the Oscars, particularly the emphasis on Cuba Gooding, Jr. for his role in *Jerry Maguire*, it seems that *the* popular catch phrase is "Show me the money!" While Cameron Crowe, the writer of the film, put these words into the mouths of actors, it seems clear that they would fit well in the mouth of our current President as well.

To win the election in 1996, President Clinton engaged in all kinds of shady practices to get money for television ads. In his book, *Behind the Oval Office*, Dick Morris let the world know that much of this money went into television advertising for the 1996 campaign, a campaign which began earlier than any previous presidential campaign in history. Buying all those advertisements costs money, and through various means the President and his team got their hands on the funds.

Perhaps the scandal with the most political resonance is the Lincoln Bedroom overnight stays by prominent contributors. In a hand–written note on an internal White House memo, Clinton demanded a list of major donators so that he could "begin overnights right away." The size of these donations varied, but it seemed that donating fifty to one hundred thousand to the campaign got people into the Lincoln Bedroom.

The official White House line was that all these contributors were friends of the President, or as deputy communications director Ann Lewis put it on *The Newshour*, "potential friends." Putting aside for the moment the fact that just about anyone would be my potential friend for a hundred thousand dollars, Lewis's explanation defies credibility. While it is certainly not impossible for Clinton to have been friends with all 938 guests in the Lincoln bedroom, the fact that many of them happened to be high–powered donors does not lend credence to Lewis's claims.

A series of coffees and other breakfast meetings with the President are also raising ethical concerns. In these meetings, large donations to the Democratic National Committee got influential businessmen invited to munch donuts with the President or other high–ranking officials.

Though Clinton claims that the meetings only served to bring various positions to the President's attention, other meetings seem a bit more sinister. One of the meetings, arranged by Clinton cabinet appointee Alexis Herman, stuck high–ranking bankers in the same room with the Comptroller of the Currency. Given the influence of the Comptroller on the banking industry, this raises serious ethical concerns.

Related charges emerged that the President and the Vice–President used the White House or other public buildings for the solicitation of campaign funds. These concerns were brought to the forefront by claims, first made by *The Washington Post*'s Bob Woodward, that Vice–President Al Gore used his White House office telephone to solicit campaign contributions.

Like the other violations, these phone calls and solicitations are of dubious legal nature. Though the Hatch Act, which covers political solicitations and other ethical concerns, states that public offices cannot be used to pressure private interests for donations, it is not legally clear whether the Hatch Act was meant to apply to the President or Vice–President. Also, though the legal issue is not clear, the actual location of a solicitation via phone calls can be defined as the receiving end of the call, in which case the solicitation would not have occurred in the White House.

Though the above allegations concern potentially unethical domestic contributions, it appears that foreign contributions also played key roles in the Clinton finance shenanigans. Most potentially damaging to the President are allegations that there was a concerted effort on the part of the Chinese to influence the presidential election.

On February 13th, the *Washington Post* reported that the FBI was investigating the Chinese embassy's role in Democratic fund–raising for the presidential campaign. On March 11th, the FBI said that two members of the National Security Council had been warned of the attempt to influence the Presidential election; Clinton claimed to have no information of this kind. After first being angry at the FBI, Clinton learned that the NSC had been informed, but that the two staffers did not pass the information up the line to NSC Director Anthony Lake. Given that Chinese efforts at influencing congressional elections had been suspected for at least six years, for Clinton and others to play ignorant defied credibility.

While it is not clear whether Chinese monies actually made it into the Democratic National Committee treasury, there was certainly a lot of money flowing in from somewhere. John Huang, a high–ranking executive in the Indonesian Lippo Group, raised millions for the re–election campaign. *National Review*'s Rich Lowry has noted that as a deputy assistant in the Commerce Department, Huang was involved in trade meetings involving Chinese nationals. Huang also had top–secret security clearance and attended intelligence meetings regarding China, at times when Commerce was playing an ever more significant role in trade between Asia and the U.S. At least some of the money which Huang raised for the Democratic National Committee (DNC) was of such shoddy character that the DNC returned $3 million.

Taken together, these fund–raising actions are incredible even for presidential politics, which are not exactly known for ethical nature or frugality. Journalist Haynes Johnson, no GOP darling, said that "the way in which [the Clinton fund–raising] was done, the scale in which it was done, the avidity with which it was done, is different to a degree than anything I think we've experienced before." Presidential historian Michael Beschloss called the fund–raising improprieties "[b]ig–scale" and argued that they "made headlines in the post–Watergate era."

Clinton and other prominent Democrats argue that all this money led to absolutely no changes in policy. This is less then credible. It's a little like advertising – would Nike, Coca–Cola, or Intel spend billions on advertising in a year if they didn't think it would work? Of course not; they want a return on an investment. Of course, the people sending their money to Washington seek a return on their money as well. What would be weird is if all this money flew into the coffers of the national parties and there *wasn't* any influence over policy. Given issues like the Most Favored Nation status, China certainly has reason to try and influence U.S. politics – it is more reasonable to assume that, if money is coming in, it is going to affect such issues.

The only solution on the horizon is some type of campaign–finance reform, which will have to face a huge constitutional hurdle in the form of *Buckley v. Valeo*, a 1976 Supreme Court case which overturned several Congressional campaign–finance laws. In *Buckley*, Congress had passed comprehensive campaign–finance reform, only to have senator file suit. The Court held that while limits could be placed on the amount of money given by an individual, there could be no limits placed on total campaign expenditures due to First Amendment concerns.

The idea, entrenched in *Buckley*, that campaign finance reform causes significant First Amendment risks, is personified in Senator Mitch McConnell (R – Ky.) who has consistently claimed that federal regulations requiring disclosure of all campaign finance activities is the best way to save the process. "Disclosure is the best disinfectant. That is the heart of the post Watergate reforms under which we've operated for the last 20 years," said McConnell.

Several notable campaign–finance reform bills have been floating around Washington in the past months, including one co–sponsored by Sen. John McCain (R – Az.). While McConnell and others in both parties have engaged in various means of blocking these bills, the impetus behind them is not going away. Politicians of all stripes want to get re–elected, and money is what make the electoral world go 'round. **MR**

Matthew Buckley is an LSA sophomore majoring in political science, economics, and philosophy.

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❑ FEATURES

First Steps Into the Real World

BY KRISTINA CURKOVIC

AS WE SLOWLY EMERGE from the euphoria of college life (such life defined as "the general retreat from the real world into one dominated by papers, Plato, and tequila"), the generalization finally hits us that these four, five, or six plus years are the most important of our lives. It is a time of preparation for that unknown real world "out there," previously cut off from us by an invisible force field that will suddenly disappear thanks not to the engineering know–how of some Star Trek character but to something called graduation.

Entrance into the real world is dominated by something called a career (or the hope of such) or by a purgatory–like term in what is called "graduate school". In either case, the college student, nearing the end of his stay in college la–la–land, must take time out of his or her busy schedule to fill out the applications and create fluffed–up resumés ("material relocation engineer" = filing) and, above all, scavenge the campus for those rare individuals whose recommendation letters (you think) will make or break your hopes of a career or admittance to grad school.

This last part of the process is inevitably the most difficult in that it is a tremendous task to find a professor who knows and recognizes you and possibly has some nice things to say about you; it may be even a greater test of your strength to actually get that professor to finish and mail the recommendation. As many unfortunate students have discovered, beating at a professor's door, sending e–mail and making phone calls on a daily basis are not unusual methods of reminder for tardy profs; nor is it unusual to discover, as did one law school–bound friend, that the dozen or so applications promptly sent off two months before are still missing one crucial part: an already–promised recommendation letter from a professor.

With a wildly–beating heart and the steadfast belief that one's life is ruined because of this one individual's lack of punctuality, one may feel rather upset and perhaps even homicidal. To curb these unnecessary and dangerous emotions, what is one to do? After getting the kindly assurance of a professor that you will get a recommendation letter on time, how long does it take before one may start to worry?

The problem is that some of us feel bad bothering our professors about such trivial details, when they, as important and well–paid individuals, are busy with the important things in life like publishing papers, grading assignments, and going to conferences in warm cities. After all, they are doing us a favor, and taking time out of their busy schedules to do so while we pathetically wait at home wondering how the rest of our young lives will turn out based on That Letter. Soon, days turn into weeks, and panic sets in. A couple of e–mails and phone calls later, you confront him at his office; yes, he'll do it tonight. Another week passes, more e–mails and visits, and suddenly, he's retired in Hawaii, and you're working in a post office in your hometown and raising rabbits in your backyard for eats.

An entire life wasted! Don't let this happen to you. There has to be a good way to get That Letter without completely frightening your professor with hoarse, late–night phone calls. After all, there are better, more productive alternatives:

• **Carry a weapon to office hours and appointments.** It will give the impression that you mean business, and may help the professor remember you better.

• **Kidnap offspring/spouse and hold for a recommendation–letter–ransom.** Only try this after you've gotten your grade for the class so there are no problems that might catch up with you later.

• **Create colorful ambiguous fliers directed at your prof and paste them all over the Fishbowl and campus.** This method has always proven rather effective at getting stuff done, hasn't it?

• **Write your own glowing recommendation and have the instructor sign it.** This leaves room for creativity and fills in the spaces that the professor may not quite recall ("Did you really help me write my recent publication? How good of you....").

As you may see, the task of putting together applications and recommendation letters can be a truly exhilarating learning experience. Honestly, not every experience may be as bad as that presented above — many professors are eager and pleased to help their students out, and are helpful in their prompt and well–written recommendations. These are the teachers who make us wonder about those who are so busy with their own lives that they can't take ten minutes to help with someone else's. When it's our futures at stake, we have to be sure that a promise of a simple letter will be fulfilled, without need of reminding, waiting, begging, or somewhat drastic, illegal measures.

This means taking things into your own hands, and planning ahead in order to avoid any disasters. There are ways of trying to make sure your letters will get done, if you're one of those lucky people for whom things are always organized and seem to always go well:

• **Get it done early.** Don't keep putting it off, hoping to find the perfect relationship with your professor.

• **Ask someone you know and trust well.** This requires that you have the perfect relationship with your professor. Also ask more profs than you really need as a back–up plan just in case, but who really has that many perfect relationships with their professors?

• **Give your prof a deadline well ahead of the actual application deadlines.** Way ahead.

• **Give your prof all the information and materials necessary:** addresses, stamps, envelopes, phone numbers (especially yours) and dates. The key is to have your prof do as little work as possible, so think ahead and figure out exactly what he or she will need.

• **Include one of your old papers from the prof's class to help jog his memory if it's been a while since you've had contact with each other.** A paper with a relatively good grade is preferable.

• **Check in on your prof to make sure things are moving along and on schedule.**

Of course, all of this depends on your relationship (perfect or not) with your professor. The ideal situation would involve friendship, trust, lots of time and resultant letters full of rave reviews. However, we all know that life is rather different. It's bad enough that we eventually have to think about leaving the secluded comforts of college life for the "real world;" it's even worse when we have to depend on others to help us get out there. **MR**

Kristina Curkovic is the Features Editor of the Review. *She scares us sometimes.*

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♫ *Music*

Great Music Rocks Your Halfass

BY EVAN KNOTT

Perhaps the greatest unknown venue for alternative and experimental music on campus is the Halfway Inn — more popularly known as the Halfass — in the basement of the East Quad residence hall. The Halfass showcases bands of all different musical genres on most Friday and Saturday nights, beginning around 8–9 p.m. The backbone of this unique, do–it–yourself student–run club is the East Quad Music Co–op. The Halfass has a remarkable, near–tragic history. The Co–op's chief soundman and electrical engineering junior Randy Darden provided the *Review* with some interesting insight into the Halfass's mission and past.

According to Darden, the original group of students who began the Co–op (none of whom are around today) ran a studio in the basement of East Quad and did occasional live shows. Students actually ran the studio with the assistance of a local expert who loaned his recording equipment. Although the studio charged an astonishingly cheap rate of $10 per hour, interest in the Co–op eventually faded, the studio closed, and the equipment was returned to its owners.

The Co–op was reborn after several years during the 1993–94 school year. Sean Rhyee and Famous Willy Jurkiewicz (both of whom are members of the local funk band the Lapdogs) as well as Mark Filip and Janine Su restarted the group. With the help of the East Quad Residence Association, money from show admission fees, and loans from Su, the Co–op was able to invest in a decent sound system.

Currently, the group is comprised mainly of East Quad residents. Co–op president Andy Schlegel, Darden, and LSA sophomore Sarah Coles oversee most of the club's shows, which includes booking bands, clearing shows with building authorities, and setting up equipment for each performance.

According to Darden, stories — albeit unconfirmed stories — of bands playing the Halfass in the past include alleged performances by R.E.M., Big Black (headed by producer wizard Steve Albini), Minor Threat (now reincarnated as Fugazi), and the legendary G.G. Allin. In 1993, lo–fi darlings Guided by Voices were scheduled to play the Halfass until the show was canceled due to an unfortunate conflict in building arrangements. More recently, a lot of local ska bands such as Mustard Plug, Gangster Fun, the Parka Kings, and the Skolars have given performances. Ann Arbor favorites Morsel and Chore have played their share of shows at the Halfass, and indie–rock favorites Brainiac even made a rare and memorable appearance last year.

People affiliated with the Co–op indicate that support for the Halfass is both strong and growing. "If someone in the Co–op is putting together a show we've usually got a long list of bands that want shows that we could add on," remarks soundman Darden. The Halfass channels much of this strong demand for weekend performance slots into benefit shows. Because the Co–op keeps only 10% of non–benefit shows and donates revenues for benefit purposes, many campus groups have taken advantage of the Halfass to raise money and awareness for various political purposes while showcasing local talent. This year, groups such as Amnesty International, Third Wave, ENACT, the Michigan Women's Handbook, and a show to raise money for breast cancer research have drawn large crowds. The Lapdog's breast cancer benefit show raised over $400. Because the Co–op does not keep any of its profits, the organization will be lobbying MSA for funding this fall to invest in new equipment. "Maybe I should email Probir," Darden jokes. Hopefully the new MSA administration can allocate some of their proposed $2000 in savings to this campus music organization.

The Co–op is planning its annual all–day spring music festival to be held outdoors at East Quad in late April. The festival includes eight hours of different music and bands, and food is prepared and served all day to keep the show going. Darden hopes the Co–op will become a forum for all types of different music scenes and styles. "There's no support for rap or hip–hop whatsoever, as far as I can tell. Spacerock, shoegaze, dreampop, etc. need more venues. People who do things truly different are the kind I'd like to see more often," says Darden. The Halfass at East Quad is an impressive venue offering talented musical forums that are definitely worth checking out — after all, the groups playing the half–ass today might be the big influences of tomorrow. **MR**

Voting By Mail: Return to Sender

BY LEE BOCKHORN

I TAKE NO SMALL AMOUNT of pride in calling myself a "conservative," and one of the most felicitous attributes of that tradition of political thought is its insistence on asking the extra, yet crucial question: what would the *unintended* consequences of this or that action be? This quality becomes useful when one is confronted with an idea which, on the surface, seems reasonable, yet upon closer scrutiny is found fundamentally flawed. One such idea currently in vogue in Lansing and other state capitals is the concept of voting–by–mail — the latest in a line of idiotic, if well–intentioned, proposals designed to combat the precipitous decline of voter turnout in American elections.

The Michigan Legislature is presently considering several vote–by–mail proposals; seventeen other states already hold some elections by mail for local, non–partisan offices, and last year Oregon garnered national attention when it held a vote–by–mail election to fill Bob Packwood's vacant Senate seat. Proponents of voting–by–mail see it as a sensible solution to the problem of decreased voter turnout. As a self–proclaimed conservative, therefore, I feel it is my duty to illuminate what the unintended, disastrous consequences of voting–by–mail would be.

Those persons obsessed with the decline in voting rates are demonstrating a common flaw in human nature — the temptation to be more concerned with outcomes (like voting percentages) than the process which leads to them. Voting is not merely about what percentage of those eligible vote, or who gets elected; it is one of many things in life in which the *experience* of the action is as important as its result. Voting by mail may be technically the same as the old–fashioned ballot box, but the experience is distinctly different. It is much like comparing a baseball game played at, say, Wrigley Field on real grass under a bright blue sky, and a game played in some grotesque cookie–cutter domed stadium. The games' outcomes might be the same, but no true lover of baseball would say that the experience of those two games would have the same value for their observers. With voting–by–mail, a vote is still a vote; and yet, can anyone say that the experience would be the same? If you pardon a slip into the vernacular, I think that it would be a completely different "vibe." So why, supporters of mail–voting might then ask, should the "experience" of voting matter, if votes are still votes? If mail–voting increases turnout, doesn't that justify its use?

The answer to these questions is this: voting is the most symbolic and powerful act of a democratic citizen. Elections are *civic*, not personal, occasions; they are days when we come together to collectively choose those who will represent us in the government's decision–making process. The change of the voting experience which mail–voting represents threatens to trivialize the importance which we believe voting should have in a democracy. As with the baseball example, the quality of an experience can effect how much one values it. With the advent of voting–by–mail, we risk the horror of an era when the sacred act of voting becomes as easy and frivolous as placing an order from the J. Crew catalog. Too many Americans gave their lives on the fields of Gettysburg and the beaches of Normandy to allow that to occur.

Proponents of voting by mail and that other idiocy, the Motor Voter Law, believe that the reason registration and voting rates are low is because the process isn't accessible and convenient enough. However, one wonders if the decline in voting is due to a perceived lack of access and convenience, or if it is because people feel so disconnected now from what government does that they don't believe their vote matters at all. If the latter is true, voting–by–mail and Motor Voter will not solve the problem; on the contrary, by trivializing an act which many citizens apparently already see as having little use, these changes threaten to exacerbate the problem they attempt to correct.

America is becoming an increasingly isolated society; not only voting, but participation in civic groups like the PTA has also declined. Technology has given us amazing means of communication, yet we seem to have less to say to each other as we retreat to gated communities behind our computer screens. In such a society, voting is one of the last and most important of the acts that confirm the **we** in "We the People." In our haste to make every aspect of life more convenient in this technology–driven age, let us not make the tragic mistake of changing voting from the act of *community* reflection and reverence for past sacrifices that it should be. **MR**

Film

Guest Gets Goofy in *Guffman*

BY TOM JOLLIFFE

There's a scene in Christopher Guest's new comedy *Waiting For Guffman* in which Eugene Levy, playing a small–town dentist with theatrical aspirations, reflects on his childhood: "I'm a funny man, but I wasn't the class clown....I sat behind him, and studied his ways." The abysmal joke that Dr. Pearl proceeds to tell will leave you laughing out loud. It is one of many very amusing scenes in Guest's faux–documentary about an amateur theater production in the fictional town of Blaine, Missouri. This film recalls Rob Reiner's mockumentary classic *This Is Spinal Tap* and the resemblance is no coincidence. Besides actor/director Guest — who played dense–as–bricks guitarist Nigel Tufnel in *Tap* — the *Waiting for Guffman* ensemble includes *Tap*'s Fred Willard as well as the writing efforts of Micheal McKean. This time around, Guest portrays Corky St. Clair, a flamboyant director hired to write and direct a musical that will celebrate 150 years of Blaine's history. Included among the historical highlights that "Red, White, and Blaine" will salute are: the town's founding (the original settlers thought they'd found California at low tide), its reputation as the Stool Capitol of the World, and the UFO visit/potluck dinner of 1946. *Waiting for Guffman* documents the entire production from open auditions at the high school to the closing number on performance night.

Waiting for Guffman
Directed by Christopher Guest.
Featuring Guest, Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara, Fred Willard.
At Ann Arbor 1&2

The film's title refers to the prominent New Yorker whom Corky hopes will invite the Blaine production to perform on Broadway. Of course, such a possibility is mere flight–of–fancy for this marginally talented Blaine cast. Fred Willard and Catherine O'Hara, as a local couple whom Corky calls "the workhorses" of the production, are hilarious. Clad in matching sweatsuits, they portray with uncanny cheesiness two seasoned veterans of recreational theater. Other "Red, White, and Blaine" performers include a young mechanic named Johnny Savage (towards whom Corky makes ridiculous overtures), Dr. Pearl, and Libby Mae Brown (Parker Posey), a Dairy Queen employee with unabashedly horrid dance skills.

Guest as St. Clair is very funny, even if the humor in his extreme flamboyance is, these days, a bit stale. He is alternately testy and affectionate, prone to bizarre tangents and metaphors of borderline taste. Some of his best bits include his confrontation with the show's musical director (a great performance by Bob Balaban), an outrageous phone tantrum, and his own costume/choreography brainstorming.

Waiting For Guffman is most successful when it remains true to the documentary format. The opening scenes with the Blaine Historian are a crack–up, and the portrayals of the Blaine City Council and their folksy mannerisms is terrific. Guest and his writers know satire, and *Guffman* captures the whole small–town Americana milieu with amusing familiarity. However, the film would benefit from a narrator to enhance its humor–in–authenticity. As it is, the film unfortunately suffers lapses in credibility when it shows us more than a documentary crew would be able, which cheapens the humor. Still, *Guffman* has a great ending. The performance of "Red, White, and Blaine" is amusing not only because of the corny choreography in songs like "Stool Boom" but because of the Blaine audience enthralled with this show about their hometown.

Waiting For Guffman is, without a doubt, a very entertaining comedy. But as mockumentaries go, it could be even better. Although endowed with tremendous improvisational talent in Guest, O'Hara, Levy, and Willard, *Guffman* should be even funnier. It's a laudable effort to be this decade's *Spinal Tap*, but, like Dr. Pearl, *Waiting For Guffman* can only sit behind the real class clown. **MR**

Crash Goes Down In Flames

BY MATTHEW BUCKLEY

TYPICALLY, THE FORMULA for an entertaining Hollywood movie is to mix violent car chases with hot–and–heavy sex scenes. This formula goes haywire in the controversial new movie, *Crash*. While the movie has more cars and sex than one could ever deal with at one sitting, it is a blatant and unentertaining mess.

Meet James Ballard, played by James Spader. Like many people, he has a job, a wife, and a car. Lest one find him some typical American, however, he has one interesting twist: Ballard becomes sexually aroused by seeing car crashes. His penthouse suite has a balcony facing the highway, so he can peer down at the winding roads to watch cars. This all leads him to a rather intense sex life with his wife Catherine (Deborah Unger).

However, one dark night Ballard averts his eyes during a trip, and ends up in an auto accident with Dr. Helen Remington (Holly Hunter). Remington's companion flies through two windshields to end up in Ballard's passenger seat, and Ballard drops into unconsciousness after watching Remington become sexually aroused.

Matthew Buckley is the National Affairs Editor of the Review.

Upon meeting Remington in the hospital, he comes to find a whole world of people with the same fetish for car crashes. Remington introduces Ballard to the enigmatic Vaughn (Elias Koteas), who conceals his fetish behind an apparently more high–minded motive of examining technology's impact on the human body. Vaughn lives out of his car, though he does have a "lab" in the home of his compatriots in crash–fetishism. It is there we meet the ex–model Gabrielle (Rosanna Arquette), an accident victim who walks only with the help of various crutches and props.

These five begin an accelerating downward spiral of sex, crashes, sex, more crashes, death, and sex. There is good reason for the film's NC–17 rating, since nearly every combination of the five is having sex at some point in the film. Apparently, the film is playing at only 300 theaters across the country, and major chains won't touch the film due to ratings clauses in the contracts. Oklahoma doesn't have a single theater showing the flick; they'll have to wait for video to see James Spader shag everything in sight.

Based on the book of the same title by J. G. Ballard, *Crash* is meant to be some kind of commentary about technology's growing role in shaping society. The film, however, fails to bring this home: here cars are just a literal and figurative vehicle for the characters to have sex.

Also, this film would benefit from an explanation on why these people love car crashes so much. Why does James Spader find sexual satisfaction from close–up situations in cars? Why does Holly Hunter get aroused by the same car crash in which her companion dies? Why do some characters *want* be maimed in car crashes? The viewer needs some sort of motivation beyond "these people are weird."

An even larger "why?" emerges about the film itself. Why did this film get a prize at the Cannes Film Festival? It won a special jury prize for creativity, originality, and audacity — I guess on those standards it satisfies. Given its obsession with sex and car crashes, it must be original and creative, right?

The acting is just average. James Spader has played the sexually quirky character in several films (remember *sex, lies, and videotape*?), so this is nothing new. Holly Hunter is interesting and seems to have some fun with the role, though she disappears for well over half the film, emerging again only at the end to fondle Arquette in the back seat of a car. More use of her could have been interesting. As Vaughn, Koteas is excellent, delivering an intense, moody performance that underpinned the whole movie.

David Cronenberg does interesting work as director. Cronenberg has plenty of experience in making quirky movies (The Fly, Dead Ringers, and Naked Lunch, to name a few), so this type of movie is right up his alley. He is able to get lots of tension out of the car scenes from the film, even though in many ways this film works on a far different basis from the car–chase thrillers so common in Hollywood. He also constantly uses background reflective surfaces to show massive onrushes of traffic, effectively surrounding the characters in a world of cars and technology in a subtle fashion.

In the end, though, script kills the whole thing. Spader, Hunter, and Cronenberg cannot get past the fact that the characters in the film have no motivations, no underlying reasons to do what they do. They are static and boring, much like this film. **MR**

Music

Sloan Survives While Icons Get Electric

BY CHRIS HAYES

For the past five or six years, Sloan has been one of Canada's best exports into the United States. Coming from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Sloan has gained a large following in the Detroit area with their intense, melodic rock most known for combining simple and memorable hook-lines with clever harmonies and witty lyrics.

Sloan had a major-label deal with DGC for their first two full length albums, *Smeared* (1992) and *Twice Removed* (1994). If you listen to Detroit radio at all, you have heard some of their singles from these two discs; "Underwhelmed" and "Pen Pals" are among the most notable.

Sloan
One Chord to Another
The Enclave

Unfortunately, while they sell out shows consistently in Canada and Michigan, their success fades with each mile south of Canada. Spin Magazine dubbed *Twice Removed* one of their "Top Ten Albums You Didn't Hear" for '94. DGC just did not have the smarts to push this clever quartet into the rest of the states. Never was a video shown on MTV. The only effort was the addition of a couple of b-sides put on *DGC Rarities v1* in 1995.

Sloan went into the studio to record *One Chord To Another* in the beginning of '96. Fans anxiously awaited its release in the states. The album was released in Canada in late-summer on Sloan's own label Murder Records, but there was still no sign of its U.S. release. Rumors about DGC's dissatisfaction with the final product flew. Next, word was out that Elektra



Sloan can survive without DGC.

was going to sign Sloan and release the album in the winter. People waited (not too patiently) to get the domestic copy instead of shelling out the extra March, The Enclave came through and released *One Chord To Another* in the US. As might be expected from those smart Canuks, Sloan has succeeded on their third effort.

One Chord opens with their first single released last summer, "The Good in Everyone." Sounding like a melding of "Underwhelmed" and "Pen Pals," it did not promise a strong album. Fortunately, the rest of the album features the strong song–writing for which Sloan is known to produce.

Without departing completely from their signature sound, *One Chord* is nonetheless different in both style and approach than the last two albums, a fact stemming from the equal lending of talents from all four members. Each sings lead on a number of tunes, and, when playing shows, they switch instruments so often it is hard to call one a bassist, guitarist, or drummer.

One Chord is a power–pop album, with the band's main priorities on brave, succinct guitar leads, strong melodies, and a mouthful of energy. This vitality is prevalent on the second tune, "Nothing Left to Make Me Want To Stay." The tight guitar and bass line with the timely distortion accompanied by Slogan's amazing ability to write catchy melodies makes it the true opener. The next track, "Autobiography," sung on reverb, is a sassy tune with layered harmonies and quirky lyrics, signature to Sloan. Recalling a distinct seventies sound, "Everything You've Done Wrong" is based on a smart brass section and rock and roll guitar. The faint hand clapping prescribes a beat and melody that is difficult to forget.

On a whole, *One Chord* is a terrific album. Although arguably a bit weaker than their first album — it falls a bit short in the charm department — it is still an irresistible group of smart songs. With or without DGC, Sloan can still produce albums with the best of them, and better than most bands that Geffen kept.

BY MIKE FIRWOOD

The predictions are becoming more and more of a reality. Some people scoffed, some believed, but now we have an irrefutable fact: Electronic music is becoming the next mainstream style.

U2
Pop
Island Records

David Bowie
Earthling
Virgin Records

The facts speak for themselves, so lets consider them. First, electronic dance kings the Chemical



Bowie: Electronic

Brothers teamed up with Noel Gallagher (Oasis) for their single Setting Sun. A video for MTV followed, played on prime time, nonetheless. Next, electronic dance–meisters Tricky and Prodigy followed with significant amount of radio and MTV circulation. Electronic music and trip-hop was slowly on the rise. Speeding up this genre's heralding–in are new albums from rock super-heavyweights U2 and David Bowie. Now, the revolution is almost certain.

Never one to fit the norm and watch the world pass him by, David Bowie has always taken his audience to new and different levels with his music. With *Earthlings*, Bowie wholeheartedly moves his style into the electronic world.

Earthlings begins with "Little Wonder," an all out power–rock track with an electronic underlay that one would swear was collaborated with the likes of the Chemical Bros. Most prevalent is Bowie's use of a heavy dance beat throughout *Earthlings*. Bowie hesitates not at all in adopting the latest style and manipulating it as only Bowie can.

"Dead Man Walking" is a killer dance track (yes I called Bowie dance) in which a distant yet distinct guitar hook remains discreetly placed in the shadows of the tune. "Battle for Britain" is the most striking song on the album. Opening with a jungle beat, it is soon layered by Bowie's melodic vocal track and a distorted guitar, leaving you in the air about whether it is even kin to rock and roll. As soon as you think you have it figured out, a piano solo breaks the rhythm and makes you guess some

This is exactly what Bowie delivers with *Earthling:* a pointed challenge to stale notions of where rock is going. Every song defies rock as it is presently accepted, breaking away from the norm, but still keeps one toe on the ground, as if to say, "I could let go and fly, but I would much rather have the best of both worlds."

U2 is right behind Bowie. Without relying so much relying on dance beats, they simply take what is out there, making it work for rock, and calling it original U2.

U2's rock has always been fresh. Many people argue that U2 no longer is in their original realm, that they have lost all that they were. That U2 has changed from their early sound is true, but these people forget that albums like *War* and *Boy* were not in the mold of what was being done in the late seventies and early eighties. U2 has always been changing. *Joshua Tree* does not sound like *October,* and neither of those sound like *Achtung Baby*. It is this progression of sound that has U2 staying at the top of rock.

With *Pop*, they are still making great rock, progressing in sound and growing in their ability to write quality songs. *Pop* is without a doubt their most diverse and eclectic album to date. The amazing combination of sounds and music on this album will no doubt make an impact on the rest of rock. Different from *Zooropa* in its more concise and organized use of dance beats and samples, *Pop* also is a much stronger album in terms of song writing and lyrics than its immediate predecessor.

Songs such as "Discotheque" and "Miami" clearly demonstrate the experimentation of sound and styles , such as dance and trip-hop. Still, Bono's knack for singing striking lyrics with honesty remains more than evident. Throughout *Pop* is a return to issues of God and religion, society and its many tribulations. These qualities prevail most in "If God Will Send His Angles," "The Playboy Mansion," and the stirring closing track, "Wake Up Dead Man."

Pop prevails as a great musical accomplishment. U2 has created a rock album that expands the limits of their songwriting as well as their credit as a rock band. While worldwide acceptance of a changing sound is yet to be fully realized, it is impossible to say that electronic music is just a fad. It is more of a challenge which many artists are beginning to embrace, especially those who are talented and brave enough to acceler-