

THE MICHIGAN REVIEW

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Features

The University's Martin Luther King Day symposium events are profiled by the *Review*

P. 3

New Developments in the attempts for an Ann Arbor- Detroit Rail Line

P. 12

News

The University plans the construction of the much-discussed North Quad

P. 6

Michigan reorganizes the state sales tax

P. 8

Congress considers funds for Greek housing renovatons

P. 10

Opinion

U-M admissions officers promise "see no race or gender" approach

P. 10

Amanda Nichols profess her love for Steve Yzerman

P. 5

Arts & Culture

OC and TRL finally recognize their own irrelevance

P. 11

MR

Martin Luther King Symposium: A Little Less Martin Luther King, a Little More Symposium



Adam Paul/ The Michigan Review

Nothing like elderly white people protesting the elimination of racial and gender preferences.

Although officially called a "planning committee", the MLK symposium planning committee leaves the leg-work to students

By SHANDA SHOOTER, '10

IN HONOR OF Martin Luther King Day, the University sponsors a month-long symposium that includes a host of events. The Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives

(OAMI) works hand in hand with the MLK Symposium Planning Committee to give some guidance to this prominent, annual University event.

According to the symposium's website, the program offers "events that focus on historical authenticity and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's" as well as "programs [that] highlight historical and contemporary issues of race, class, social justice, diversity, and societal change."

The theme for this year's event is "Building the Beloved Community." This phrase was used by Dr. King several times throughout his career to stress social harmony. While the plan-

ning committee choose events like a keynote speech, most events are submitted by student groups.

Gena Flynn, the committee's spokesperson, stated that in her "two years of experience, no event has been turned down for endorsement." She explained the criteria for an event being turned down would simply be if the event did not take place on campus or somewhere near it. This process came to the delight of student groups. Matt Linke, who helped plan the People and the Sky event, said his group found the process "quite convenient."

When a group submits their event on the site, it is checked for spelling and relevance, and then it is considered an official symposium event with almost no other considerations.

One thing groups are sometimes asked to clarify and change is the abbreviation "MLK" in their title or description to "Martin Luther King" because some many people may not know what the letters mean. Ironically, the abbreviation appears on the University's homepage to direct audience to the symposium website.

In the past two years, no event has been turned down for endorsement by the MLK symposium

Although the University provides endorsement to groups in their leaflet and website, they do not provide help planning the event. The University attempts to accommodate the time and location requests of each event, and they allow students to undertake planning. Furthermore, events are rarely given funding from the

SEE "MLK PLANNING,"
PAGE 3

Committee Members, University Take Silent Approach to "Diversity Blueprints" Task Force

Despite much fanfare in November, President Coleman's committee is established with little campus attention

By ADAM PASCARELLA, '10

WHEN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT Mary Sue Coleman announced the creation of the Diversity Blueprints task force on November 21, she encouraged broad participation and "thoughtful input from everybody in

our community." Yet more than two months after this announcement, the administration and committee members are reluctant to answer key questions about the task force.

Notably absent from President Coleman's November 21 e-mail announcement were the means by which committee members would be selected.

"More details will be coming soon about members of the task force," the e-mail read.

Following the announcement, *The Michigan Review* made several attempts to inquire as to how committee members would be selected, and how interested members could apply. Using the e-mail addresses provided in Coleman's e-mail, no message elicited a response.

Following the announcement of the Task Force launch—which came on December 21, during the tail end of finals week—*The Michigan Review* made attempts to contact members of the committee in order to find out how they were selected to the committee, what views committee members had on diversity in the

post-Prop 2 era, and why the committee was not launched "immediately" as indicated in President Coleman's email, but a month later when most students were home for break.

Out of thirty-five members of the Task Force that *The Michigan Review* attempted to question, only three members of the committee answered our inquiries, Task Force co-chair Provost Lester Monts, Professor Scott Page and Professor David Munson.

Many other committee members referred inquiries to University spokeswomen Julie Peterson or Kelly Cunningham. Peterson could not be reached, and Cunningham refused to be quoted.

Attempts were made to collect comments from the members of the Task Force, as well as to contact U-M spokesmen for a statement. Again, one University spokeswoman "couldn't be quoted," and another spokeswoman was out

SEE "DIVERSITY"
PAGE 9

"I don't even know how I was selected to serve on the committee."

-Engineering Dean
David Munson

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page two.

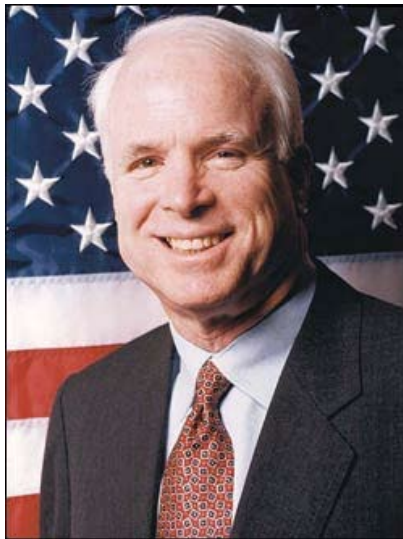
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Reviewing the Presidential Favorites

The first presidential election without an incumbent in 80 years is as wide open as an election with that sort of billing would be expected to be. Still, frontrunners are being clearly defined, and the money is already flowing into these well-supported campaigns. The primaries, the first of which is just under one year away, will include both new faces and former candidates among the front runners. Here we assess the candidates that we see as having the best chance to make it into the general election, along with some things you might or might not know about the 2008 candidates.

Republicans

1) **John Sidney McCain III:** Supported by many grassroots Republicans, he combines a delicious blend of fruity social policy and emphasis on military. His perceived toughness, which comes, justifiably, from his experiences in Vietnam and long-time involvement in foreign policy, could be his greatest asset given the state of global affairs. McCain's appeal, to some, also comes from his reputation as a maverick; given that even many Republicans are looking for a new direction for Iraq, McCain could be just the right man for the job. At some point during the campaign, he will have to answer tough questions about his views on social issues, and this may decide his fate. It will be interesting to see if his once foe, now friend, George W. Bush, will be by his side during the campaign.



2) **Rudolph William Louis Giuliani III:** Probably the only Republican with a "Jew" in his name. His powerful appeal, forged after 9/11, covers a wide range of Americans. This assessment, of course, is according to the New York Times, which might say something about just how far right Giuliani is—or is not. Still, Giuliani has an impressive record of crime fighting and urban redevelopment experience; with a long tenure as mayor of one of the world's largest cities, Giuliani is a unique Republican candidate who will be able to talk in-depth about a variety of domestic issues, especially those pertaining to cities. His ability to win New York, New Jersey, and possibly Connecticut could be enough incentive for Republican brass to support a Giuliani candidacy.

3) **Willard Mitt Romney:** Ironically, as a Mormon, he is one of the few Republican candidates to only have had one wife. Born in Detroit and raised in Michigan while his father was governor of the state, Romney became a self-made businessman, was the CEO of the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic Committee, and just finished a term as Governor of Massachusetts, where he developed a universal health care plan without raising taxes, created a scholarship fund for free public school tuition for the top 25 percent of high school graduates, and aggressively warded off attempts to allow gay marriage in his state. His combination of traditional social conservatism with his innovative approach to complex issues which he has dealt with, from health care reform to curbing suburban sprawl, make him a versatile and strong candidate.

4) **Newton Leroy Gingrich:** A clean, uncomplicated record is the opposite of what this seasoned politician and former Speaker of the House has. Gingrich, who resigned after a slew of corruption charges, is still a master articulator of conservative vision and appealing to social conservatives, in addition to those concerned with curbing the growth of the federal government, something which the current administration has a questionable record. Though Gingrich is from the south and is socially conservative, he, like the other Republican frontrunners, still represents a major change of

pace from the current president, if for no other reason than his fine speaking skills.

5) **Ronald Ernest Paul:** Of no relation to another fine libertarian of *Michigan Review* fame, Ron Paul is no ordinary Texas Republican. The longtime congressman was a Democrat until the 1994 Republican revolution, but has maintained ties with libertarians throughout the duration. Paul is a medical doctor originally from Pittsburgh who did his residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. He is perhaps the most unorthodox Republican in the race, having voted against the Iraq War because of his strong non-interventionist views. He is strongly against increased spending and taxes, and if the 2008 campaign becomes an indictment against the growth of government seen under President Bush, then Paul could be in a strong position.

Democrats

1) **Barack Hussein Obama:** He's the darling of every 18-24 year old female, but brings the race factor into the campaign, and this will drive pollsters crazy. Obama has a knack for untimely fits of honesty, which may or may not be to his benefit in a closely-watched campaign. If he can overcome the Clinton machine, he could be one step from the presidency. It is always possible that he could drop out of the race once voters figure out his middle name, however.



2) **Hilary Rodham Clinton:** She already holds a commanding lead among Democrats, and especially among women. Bush-Clinton-Bush-Clinton should scare the hell out of us, though. She will have a tough time explaining the moderation of her voting record during the last few years of her senate term. Look how the last "flip-flopper" fared in a presidential campaign.

3) **Johnny Reid Edwards:** Also a favorite among the college-aged crowd, which might matter if we actually voted. He is a union favorite who would surely be able to carry Michigan. The populist trial lawyer should hope the economy heads back into a recession so that he can resurrect his class-warfare "two Americas" rhetoric.

4) **William Blaine Richardson:** The Mexican-American Governor of New Mexico has a great record which will permit him to speak with confidence on immigration, energy, and foreign affairs issues. As governor he has been noted for improving his state's infrastructure. Meanwhile, he was elected chairman of the Democratic Governors Association.

5) **John Forbes Kerry:** We've got our fingers crossed for Kerry part two, but we're also realistic. He has a shot if he promises to refrain from telling jokes about the military for the next two years. This quintessential New England, liberal Catholic will probably have to remake his image after failing in 2004, but wasn't this his most basic problem during the last campaign ("flip-flop")?

features.

the michigan review

MLK Symposium Keynote Speaker Kweisi Mfume Encourages Increased Activism

BY EDDIE PERRY, '08

ON MONDAY, JANUARY 15th, the University of Michigan kicked off its annual Martin Luther King Symposium at Hill Auditorium. Kweisi Mfume, a former member of Congress and the past President of the NAACP delivered the memorial keynote lecture. Mfume spoke powerfully, attempting to trigger student activism. While Mfume spoke briefly of the theme of “building a beloved community,” he focused primarily on contemporary issues.

Mfume spoke of his personal background and how it affected his outlook on life. When he was 16, his mother died and

enrolled in the Community College of Baltimore, attended Morgan State University and ultimately got a Master's degree in Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins University. In 1986 Mfume was elected to the House of Representatives, where he became a very active member over the next decade. In 1996, Mfume became the President and Chief Executive Officer of the NAACP.

After lavishly thanking Mary Sue Coleman and praising her undying quest of “fighting difficult changes,” Mfume started his speech by saying, “Let me take a minute to reaffirm myself...I'm a Baptist minister, so I know what I'm saying...okay?”

Mfume quickly examined a range of

Mfume started his speech by saying, “Let me take a minute to reaffirm myself... I'm a Baptist minister, so I know what I'm saying... okay?”

he dropped out of school to raise his three younger sisters. He quickly entrenched himself in a life filled with gangs, crime, and drugs. Mfume realized he needed an education to better his own life and have a positive impact on society. He earned a GED,

national topics, arguing that every American should be able to hold a job if they wished. He then proclaimed, “Full employment has never been the goal of the Civil Rights Movement. There was full employment in slavery! Full employment does not mean there is full

“MLK PLANNING”

FROM PAGE 1

Planning Committee itself.

The University has even been willing to allow controversial events onto the website. The “March to Undo Proposal 2” is sponsored by the group By Any Means Necessary (BAMN). The group is currently suing the University. Flynn stated that she was not “aware of a lawsuit” and that this student group has always been included in the pam-

phlet and website. The event culminated with a performance by a marching band and speakers on the Diag.

Flynn explained that this year's theme, “Building the Beloved Community,” was chosen based on the belief that all of us globally would benefit from coming together rather than being divided by individual interests. The Planning Committee believes that if the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. were still alive he would agree with the need to press for a global concept of the

When a group submits their event on the site, it is checked for spelling and relevance, and then it is considered an official symposium event with almost no other considerations



BAMN never disappoints, in rain, sleet, or snow.

“beloved community.”

This theme has generated several events that seem only tangentially related to Dr. King's vision. For instance, one event entitled “Building the Beloved Food Community” asks students to consider “How can food be used to help build the beloved community and simultaneously transcend and celebrate difference?” The event hosted members of local restaurants including Zingerman's to discuss this topic.

If there just weren't enough to see and do on January 15th, don't forget you have another month to celebrate. With several events running into February, student groups will continue to show their contributions to the symposium for some time. **MR**



Kweisi tells it like it is.

development, but in full development there is almost always full employment.”

Instead of elaborating on this utterly perplexing statement, Mfume seemed to back up his contention with, “We ought to have a problem with the fact that one of six people are living below the poverty line.”

From there Mfume proclaimed, “When we refuse to take full responsibility for our lives and our futures, and only blame white people for our problems, we must say to ourselves, ‘We have a problem!’ When everybody in this nation wakes up today and does not have healthcare, we must say that we have a problem!”

Next, Mfume decreed that the federal budget deficit is growing to unthinkable amounts. Mfume provided nominal figures of per capita ownership by each American

of the national debt. These nominal, un-‘inflation-adjusted’ figures lacked an awareness that the federal debt is only roughly 3.5 percent of real GDP, which is, historically-speaking, a relatively small number.

Commenting on the Iraq war, Mfume stated that, “It's not a disgrace, not to be able to reach up and touch the stars, but it would be forever a disgrace to have no stars to touch.” He compared the opposition to the war with Dr. King's actions against the Vietnam War.

Mfume stressed that like Dr. King, modern activists face innumerable challenges. He explained that Dr. King taught us that opposition “cannot really kill dreams.” Unlike the challenges he discussed, Mfume received unanimous applause and a standing ovation at the conclusion of his lecture. **MR**

University Events honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King

- “Therapeutic Advances in Cutaneous T-Cell Lymphoma: A New Era?”

Dr. Youn Kim of Stanford delivers a lecture for the Department of Dermatology.

- “Shaping Space”

Allison Williams lectures about the design strategy of corporate headquarters, cultural institutions, and urban high-rise developments.

- “Finding Filipino-American Identity”

According to the description, this event celebrates Filipino-American identity through “song, (modern/traditional) dance, spoken word, and more!”

- “Cultural Issues in Children's Mental Health Research and Practice”

This event examines the multicultural implications of children's mental health issues. Unfortunately, this event is closed to the public.

- “Jazz: Resistance Through Song”

Penny von Eschwan, a “campus expert” who wrote a book called “Satchmo Blows up the World,” talks about the characterization of blacks being associated with jazz music that apparently became prevalent during the Cold War.

- “Streptococcus Pneumoniae Tissue Specific Virulence and Implications for the Conjugate Vaccine”

Dr. Melinda Pettigrew of Yale lectures on her specialty of infectious diseases in infants, children, and young adults.

- “Non-Volence Training”

We're not sure either.

- “Survivor Expressions: Clothesline Project Shirt Making”

SAPAC sponsors a presentation from The Clothesline Project, a group that allows survivors of sexual violence to “create t-shirts in a safe space” to speak out about their experiences.

editorials.

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The Review reserves the right to edit letters to the editor for length and clarity.

Admissions Office “Honor System” Leaves Many Skeptical

It has taken two months, but the University of Michigan is officially forbidden from considering race or gender in admissions. As a matter of huge debate, it would appear that Proposal 2 can finally take a rest. But it cannot. Not here. Despite the University’s official statement that they will respect the law, U-M announced on January 10 that the race and gender of applicants would remain on the application forms.

This prompts a humorous image: a blindfolded admissions officer shuffling the application, remarking, “Well, this looks like a really good application.” The natural question resulting from this announcement is how can a subjective process and a fallible officer not consider the information provided them? A spokeswoman for the University has assured students and alumni that the counselors “are ethical people with integrity, but we won’t crawl inside the mind of an admissions counselor.” But why don’t they enact controls so that they don’t have to crawl inside counselors’ minds? This is the obligation of the University, to uphold the law to the extent of its intention. However, at every step of the process, Mary Sue Coleman and her posse have dragged their feet, kicking and screaming against the will of the voters.

Proposal 2 was passed very much in imitation of Proposition 209 in California, which in 1996 was an equal shock to such liberally-run universities as Berkeley and UCLA. In contrast, these universities chose not to allow race and gender to even appear on the application. People have protested a similar agenda at Michigan because they say our status as a prominent research university would diminish. As far as anyone can tell, neither UCLA nor Berkeley has lost any respect in their research because of 201’s effect.

Of course, the crux of the issue is how diversity and education were affected by their decision. After race-blind admissions went into effect at Berkeley, enrollment of African-Americans and Hispanics dropped, while admissions of Caucasian and Asian students rose. In effect, fewer but better-qualified African-American and Hispanic students were accepted, and the minorities who remained were more likely to graduate. This is clearly an unacceptable development for administrators at U-M.

Michigan is not alone in its search for life, liberty, and the pursuit of loopholes. In response to the decreased level of “diversity” at prestigious places such as Berkeley, the Board of Regents introduced a “hardship” factor to applications in 2001. An extremely subjective introduction to the application, it is based on the concept that whites have historically been and continue to be the primary beneficiaries of racial preference anyways. Unfortunately for the Michigan voters, U-M has flouted the law’s intention by refusing to black out (pun intended) the information. As University spokeswoman Julie Peterson says, “There’s nothing in Proposal 2 that says race has to be a secret. It is simply not going to be a factor in our decision.”

That is an admirable sentiment. Sadly, it leaves nothing leaves too much breathing room for liberal administrators to loosely interpret the law. In reassuring the voters that their word will be respected at this University, it is unsuccessful. The voters are the last people being considered in this situation. Instead, the focus is the agenda of Coleman and her supporters in the administration and faculty. They have a right to their opinion. But they are granted that right by law, the very law against which they are so violently struggling. By ignoring its intention, U-M is ignoring every person who voted for Proposal 2.

In the words of a former Berkeley student in support of affirmative action, “Admissions policies are complex because it is a complex issue. To oversimplify them would not be the way to go. To make it simple and based on hard numbers is not necessarily the right thing to do in this case.” Actually, simplification sounds like an excellent notion. Perhaps we should start that now, by upholding the law. **MR**

MLK Symposium Forgets its Founding

EVERY YEAR, THE University celebrates Martin Luther King Day with a two-month Symposium. This year’s symposium began on January 8th, ends on February 21st, and contains over 80 events.

The University long ago abandoned all efforts to connect its MLK symposium activities to the legacy of Dr. King. In fact, to have an event placed on the symposium website, one needn’t explain how its relation to Martin Luther King at all.

Next year, perhaps the University should consider removing the abbreviation in the title, as it seems to be causing administrators to abbreviate their thinking concerning Dr. King’s impact. At U-M, the second Monday of January has become a catchall day to promote buzz concepts like social justice, dialogue and compassion. The University and groups have shown a bold willingness to utilize the name of Dr. King to extol their own values.

Dr. King stood for more than racial equality and we should celebrate his numerous contributions. But events such as “Building the Beloved Food Community,” a planetarium exhibit entitled “The People and their Sky,” and an analysis of “Streptococcus Pneumonia Tissue Specific Virulence and Implications for the Conjugate Vaccine” seem to have little relevance to King’s Dream.

In her introduction for this year’s keynote speech, President Coleman spoke at length about the effect of Proposal 2 on the University’s quest for diversity. The implied logic was that Dr. King would surely be standing beside the University in its fight. In reality, the “diversicult” was born long after Dr. King’s death.

While the University has attempted to expand on the impact of Dr. King, their attempt has gone wildly off-track. Even events that relate to Dr. King seem to be feigned attempts to examine racial issues in America.

A panel discussion of Prop 2 sponsored by the Dental School serves as a prime example. The event pitted our own Managing Editor, Adam Paul against three licensed attorneys, and a graduate student who had received an award for “Contributions to Diversity.” Prior to the event, the congregation rose to sing the Blank National Anthem.

The University should focus on promoting a few events such as speakers, performers, or presenters of exceptional quality. Instead the University has invested time in drafting a massive event schedule that includes many events sponsored solely by student groups. Since the symposium’s Planning Committee’s spokesperson, Gena Flynn pointed out that no student event has been turned down in her experience, the University is essentially providing tacit approval for any event students wish to host.

Furthermore, the University seems to put little effort into creating events of interest to the general student population. Even if the University continues to bring prominent leaders like former NAACP President Keisei Mfume to campus, few students attend. For most students Dr. King’s holiday provides an opportunity to drink on Sunday night and enjoy a Monday without classes.

The fervor surrounding the passage of Prop 2 this November was evidence that the student body is willing to engage in critical discussions on racial issues. The Martin Luther King symposium provided an excellent opportunity to engage students in such discussions.

Instead, the symposium’s broad “Building the Beloved Community” theme seemed to be a better opportunity for University groups, departments, and schools to espouse every liberal idea under the sun.

Of course the University should honor Dr. King, but it must be careful not to extol him as a mystical figure. There is a distinct difference between extrapolating Dr. King’s principles to examine contemporary events and saying that Dr. King would take University-approved positions on contemporary issues. **MR**

Diversity Blueprints Task Force: Silence Isn’t Golden

The “Diversity Blueprints” committee has met a month later than expected. When it was finally announced, it was on December 21st, the last day of exams when the University campus is nearly deserted. There has been no clarification regarding how members were chosen to be members of the committee or why the date of the first committee meeting was so late.

Despite President Coleman’s email which stated that “This is an historic moment, and an opportunity to apply our collective creative, energetic thinking to discover the most effective ways to support diversity. We will succeed only if we have thoughtful input from everyone in our community,” questions regarding how, precisely, students could get involved in a proactive manner went unanswered. The four (count them, four) student members of the committee are all well-known liberals who seem to fall on the same side of the affirmative action/Proposition 2 debate. Other members of the committee are unsure how they were chosen. In short, this seems, in a word, sketchy.

This committee, devised as a means of establishing open dialogue regarding diversity issues in the wake of Proposition 2, has ironically become segregated from the campus community as a whole. Wouldn’t it be logical for a committee meant to be representative of the university population, and include those who opposed affirmative action, voted for Proposition 2, or whose ideas regarding ways to improve the fabric of the University don’t include the word “lawsuit”?

Maybe this committee could have representatives from every department, and campus organizations ranging from Hillel to Young Americans for Freedom. But maybe that’s a little too far of a stretch for President Coleman and her constituents. It’s a lot easier to set the University’s wealth of lawyers on the state government and make BAMN and other radical student groups feel gratified. Is that it? Would opening up this committee to the student body at-large and encompassing the wide swath of political opinions on campus leave the University leadership vulnerable to the left-wing student groups that seem to own university politics at Michigan? Would there be a march? Would small children throw soy sauce at people? And more important, is that what Mary Sue is really afraid of? If so, that’s understandable.

Marches and protests don’t look good in the media. Radical groups are more than willing to trot out speakers and a group of generally angry people that it knows will provide sound bites for local news stations and the occasional *New York Times* third page. It’s perfectly normal to want to limit campus reactionaries by filling committees with their kin. But the easy way is rarely the best way.

If the University of Michigan really wants to make diversity possible it should improve the campus community and make the learning experience all that it can be. This will only happen if its leadership stops being afraid. Afraid of campus groups, afraid of hearing questions and suggestions its not entirely prepared for—afraid of real change. It’s a painful process, I know. But every great movement to improve a community has involved both sides sitting down (often grudgingly) to come up with a solution to a problem. According to Mary Sue Coleman, diversifying campus and eliminating racial and cultural barriers are our problems. A truly “diverse” committee can come up with the solutions that will foment a better Michigan. Unless, of course, this committee is an example of mere posturing, making a show of finding solutions while the University administration attempts to find a loophole to go back to the old system of affirmative action. But that couldn’t be true, could it? **MR**

columns.

the michigan review

■ *The Feminine Mystique*

Steve Yzerman: A Legend and an Icon for a City

THE PRODIGAL SON has returned home. I speak, of course, of Chris Webber, the University of Michigan basketball star-turned-sometimes-NBA star and his recent signing with the Detroit Pistons. Webber made it clear that he signed with the Pistons out of his hope to win a championship, an accomplishment that has eluded him since he came to Ann Arbor in 1991. Within this reunion of hometown and hero, however, there is an undeniable aspect of redemption.

Webber needs redemption for the sins committed during his time as a Wolverine. You know, the infamous “time-out” incident of the 1993 NCAA Final Four, or the scandal with U-M booster Ed Martin that brought the banners down from the Crisler rafters and several penalties upon the current basketball program, to name a few. Yes, there certainly is a magic in that hometown vibe, for Webber was almost universally cheered by the Palace crowd as he appeared courtside at the Palace of Auburn Hills on Tuesday.

Webber is here now, but he has not



AMANDA
NICHOLS

been around since 1993, when he left U-M early to enter the draft. Maybe he’s noticed already, but in that time, we Detroiters have become a bit picky about who we let assume that hometown label. Take former MSU basketball standout and “Flintstone” Mateen Cleaves; he might have been a local boy, but fans made him earn his stripes—and he didn’t. Now, he no longer plays professionally.

But don’t let that fool you. Every so often, there is a sports figure who we in this struggling city grasp onto as our own. After all, why not? There isn’t much else left to take hold of.

Imagine this: it’s the summer of 1986. Right around the time that yours truly is making her debut into the world, the Tigers are battling it out for the AL East, the Pistons have most of their “Bad Boys” lineup in place, and the Lions are coming off a 7-9 season—and are about to go 5-11 (some things never change). And, at Joe Louis Arena, a brand new coach—a French-Canadian with his heart on his sleeve (the worst kind of French Canadian)—names a soft-spoken, peach-fuzzed, twenty one-year old kid captain of one of hockey’s most storied—but, in ’86, squandering—franchises.

Now, twenty-one years later, the number of that boy—yes, I can call Steve Yzerman a boy because, surely, at that time he was one—flutters next to those of some of hockey’s all-time greatest players. Perhaps you’re one of those kids, who, like me, knew no other captain in their lifetime. Perhaps you never saw a single season draw to a close without Stevie Y gracing the ice at least once, if not every night. Perhaps you are a bit older and remember the years before the Angel Yzerman came down

from Peterborough, Ontario to save the team. Maybe, like me, you saw one of the countless articles written about Yzerman in recent days that lays claim to his class and dig-

nity, his talent, and his leadership both on and off the ice.

Like any good Red Wings fan would, I have devoured those pieces—and the occasional YouTube fan videos—voraciously. But in a certain respect, I feel those big sportswriters at ESPN, Sports Illustrated, and even the Detroit News and Free Press are missing something. They haven’t said is that, for the past twenty-odd years, Yzerman has been “it” for us.

The Tigers won the World Series a year

after Yzerman first graced Detroit with his presence, but have floundered in obscurity until this year. The Lions saw moderate success here and there, but the collective memory of that team is far more disappointing than pleasant. And the Pistons have won three championships, but even that team has been spotty. Stevie’s always been there—through injuries to his knee, his back, his left eye; through the trade rumors of the mid ’90s; through the heartbreaking playoff losses. Most of the players and coaches on every single Motown team have come and gone, but since Reagan was serving out his first term in office, Yzerman has stayed. In a town where so much has crumbled he was something this city and its fans could depend on.

For a while, there was a mural of Yzerman on the side of a Detroit building. “Born,” it said, “Cranbrook, BC, 1965. Adopted, Detroit, 1983.” Though Webber may be feeling that magic hometown vibe, it can never equal the undying love and almost-worship lavished upon Yzerman every night at Joe Louis Arena.

So the prodigal son may have returned home to a grand celebration at the Palace, and perhaps he’ll even lead his new team to a championship. Regardless, nothing he can achieve here will equal what the steady, dependable, and faithful adopted son of Detroit has done for almost twenty-four years—the son who never once needed to ask for our redemption, and to whom we would most gladly have given it. **MR**

■ *Strict Scrutiny*

The Death of a Newspaper (Not this One, Though)

WHEN I JOINED the *Review’s* Editorial Board this fall, I was excited and optimistic about our role on campus.

Those feelings soon took a jolt.

It was not the massive workload, but rather seeing a front page headline in *The Economist* reading, “Who killed the newspaper?” that gave me my only moment of reservation. I could not believe that before I had even taken my first serious steps into print journalism, the medium had already been condemned to antiquity.

The Economist invokes Philip Meyer’s book, *The Vanishing Newspaper*, which estimates that, “the first quarter of 2043 will be the moment when newsprint dies in America.” The recent spike in online content lends credence to this shocking prophecy. Americans are increasingly going to alternative sources for their news. Online components let readers in the States gain access to previously inaccessible outlets, like the UK’s *Financial Times* or the *Irish Times*. Since most newspapers post a large portion of their print and original online content for free access, many have become loath to pay for news. Yet even *The Wall Street Journal*, one of the few publications to charge

for online access, has experienced success in its online forays. A large portion of new online revenues have come from a surge in advertising. *The Economist* estimates advertising growth may soon slow and more papers may switch toward a pay system.

A large-scale pay system could make print copies more attractive to readers. So far almost no newspaper has given up on its print edition. For instance, *The Journal* just celebrated a major redesign of its print edition that included a move to narrower pages and more summary boxes by publishing a special readers’ guide. While the redesign’s focus on both quick comprehension and ergonomics indicate a particular commitment to print, the need to reduce costs and the shrinkage size means that the paper will allot 10% space to the news.

It is important to recognize that this decrease in news may be partly independent of the new online embrace. Many papers have increased coverage of entertainment and sports but this likely represents a greater societal shift away from interest in world politics and toward popular culture.

These types of realignments could be more damaging to the quality of newspapers than a shift to online distribution. Some fear that a shift to online content only will destabilize incomes in the industry. These critics forget that fickle world of

freelance journalism has an entrenched history in print papers. While many had feared that print journalists would resist working online, many are now embracing the new medium. As *The New York Times* reported, a new online political endeavor, *The Politico*, has been founded by established journalists taking a risk. *The Politico*, which will launch

commenting on “hyperlocal” news.

The Review may fit well here. By focusing on serving the U-M community, we can both provide exclusive content and keep our readership geographically-centered enough to make print worthwhile. Of course, our writers love when national media pick-up their stories but in trying

to serve the local community, print remains in invaluable medium for us.

In the end, quality trumps distribution method. As

readers and editors, our concern should direct us toward preserving the investigative, analytical, and fact-rich news pieces that make the Fourth Estate important. Despite a declining faith in print, especially by newspapers themselves, Meyer’s 2043 prediction is still a long way off. Sure, *ceteris paribus*, print journalism seems to be in decline. But if advertising revenues begins to grow more slowly, or even decline, user payment plans make online less attractive, or if readers become more attracted to local news, print may yet have a life. **MR**



ADAM
PAUL

While local newspapers may be the most squeezed by costs, they may have the most to gain by staying in print.

later this month, advertises itself more like an entertainment experience, even hosting a “trailer” on its website. Yet its editor-in-chief, John Harris, left a 21-year job at the *The Washington Post* in favor of the project. Nor is Harris alone; he brought a number of former Post staffers into the venture as well.

As national and international news becomes increasingly available and ubiquitous, local news becomes more exclusive and engaging. While local newspapers may be most squeezed by costs, they may have the most to gain by staying in print. National newspapers use the Internet to vie for a larger audience and a larger share of advertising, small papers may be most successful

news.

the michigan review



Brian Biglin/ The Michigan Review

The Frieze Building, formerly Ann Arbor High School, is set to be razed in the summer of 2007.

U-M Life Sciences Institute deals with ever-changing laws

On-campus institute is at the center of recent stem cell news and debates

BY STEVEN BENGAL, '10

ONE OF THE most controversial, but perhaps beneficial, research topics in the world of science today revolves around stem cells. The University of Michigan is heavily involved in furthering stem cell research, but many people do not know exactly what they are doing.

First, there are two basic types of stem cells: embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells.

Embryonic stem cells are created in laboratories, using artificially inseminated eggs, while adult stem cells are found in fetuses, newborns, children and adults, according to the "Stem Cells—Explained and Explored" education webpage at the Life Sciences at Michigan home page.

Various other stem cells can be found, such as hematopoietic stem cells from umbilical cords, but these are not nearly as common. A recent discovery may allow scientists to extract stem cells from amniotic fluid, which has developed considerable interest in the scientific community.

Embryonic stem cells are much less specialized than adult stem cells, and therefore are more useful for the medical field. Although there is confidence about the possible benefits of embryonic stem cells, there is hesitance to attempt to find new methods to acquire these miracle cells, conceivably because of the hotbed of moral issues that surrounds the acquiring stem cells.

Continued research in both the areas of adult stem cells and embryonic stem cells are being pursued by U-M. Numerous tests are being enacted in an attempt to deter breast cancer, encourage the growth of bone cells, and heal brain injuries. U-M is home to the U-M Exploratory Center for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research, a laboratory that houses embryonic stem cells that are used by research scientists, and the U-M Center for

Stem Cell Biology, a center that is focused "on using stem cells to answer fundamental scientific questions," according to Life Sciences at Michigan.

U-M makes efforts to dissuade any moral qualms that might arise by displaying the main guidelines of the National Academy of Sciences, which it purportedly adheres to. Although these basic rules are followed, some feel that they may be too restricting.

With Michigan becoming more and more involved with continuing research, questions about the future of stem cell research, with the current restrictions in place, arise.

"There is near universal agreement among respected scientists that current restrictions should be relaxed," said Dr. Alan Saltiel, a faculty member at the Life Sciences Institute.

"The federal and Michigan laws have been the biggest challenges, but our commitment here in the LSI to follow the science where it leads is Michigan's strength and research signature. We are vigorously pursuing this promising area of discovery and realize that most citizens support this research."

Saltiel added that, "Michigan law does not protect a single embryo from destruction; it only delays medical research."

In addition, according to the Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences Poll, 58 percent of Americans believe in embryonic stem cell research, while 42 percent are opposed, and 32 percent are confused about the differences in the different types of stem cell research.

With a third of the nation unsure about the different types of stem cells, it is important that the facts behind stem cell research are known. U-M appears to be doing everything it can to further stem cell research while educating the general public. **MR**

Newest Campus Dorm Set to Break Ground

North Quad will enliven State Street, add to campus skyline

BY EVAN WLADIS, '10

IT LOOKS AS if the Michigan Stadium renovation will not be the only university project completed by the summer of 2010. At their December meeting, the University Board of Regents approved a 10-story, traditional design for North Quad; site preparation is currently underway at the location bounded by State, Huron, Washington, and the Rackham Graduate School.

The 360,000 square foot "northwestern gateway" to Central Campus, as President Coleman calls it, will cost a total of \$175 million. The building will feature both residential space and classrooms in an effort to blur the line between living and learning. The structure is expected to accommodate 460 students, while also housing the Sweetland Writing Center, School of Information, Language Resource Center, and the departments of Communication Studies and Screen Arts and Culture.

"North Quad will offer suite-style units, a new room type not currently available on campus; we anticipate that continuing students will find this very appealing," said Alan Levy, Director of Housing Public Affairs for University Housing. Students interested in North Quad will participate in the annual reapplication process, which involves a lottery drawing to determine priority order for contract signing. The University has not yet made a final decision on whether a learning community will be developed for the hall.

Although some residents in and around the neighborhood initially protested the relocation of nearly 500 students to the area, Regent Olivia Maynard said that there have been "no complaints recently." She also noted that the regents have received congratulations from several local vendors and shopkeepers, expressing their approval for the project "with great enthusiasm."

Kelly McLeod, the owner of Getup Vintage Clothing on State Street, says that the increased student pedestrian traffic will "absolutely make a difference" in terms of business. "The majority of our customers are students wandering around between classes," she said. "Because we're on the third story of the building, it takes a little luck to find us, so more student traffic will



This University rendering puts the 'quad' in North Quad.



Brian Biglin/ The Michigan Review

The new dorm will replace the decaying Frieze Building, despite the protests of local residents.

mean everything to the business."

Although North Quad has the capacity to hold nearly 500 students, Levy maintains that U-M "is not planning on increasing the size of the freshman class related to the availability of additional beds." In addition to the construction of North Quad, renovations to Mosher-Jordan and Stockwell Halls will be complete in 2008 and 2010, respectfully.

Levy said that there is "a very strong institutional interest in being able to offer all freshmen on-campus housing." For this reason, U-M "works very hard to achieve that outcome, even in years when the freshman class is much larger than anticipated." If freshman classes do not become any larger, this process will be considerably easier after these renovations.

Levy also feels that new housing and academic facilities will provide for a subtle improvement in matriculation rates. "Residential life factors into the decision-making of students and their families in determining whether to apply to Michigan and whether to ultimately come here," he said, "but our academic reputation and quality is overwhelmingly the most cited reason for choosing Michigan."

As to why U-M has waited until now to build, Levy said that President Coleman realized that "there is an expectation that every aspect of this institution needs to be excellent if not superior and it was time to renew U-M's aging residence halls to better meet those expectations. From University Housing's perspective, we want to provide students with the best possible residential and dining experience, and we know we fall short of that standard with our current facilities."

Levy believes that renewal of existing halls and construction of new residential spaces "such as North Quad will have a significant impact on the desire of students already here to return to on-campus housing for a second and third year. Having more returning students living on campus," he continues, "is important both for our long-term financial standing as well as the impact those students have on the quality and diversity of our residential communities."

In order to make room for North Quad, the Frieze Building, a historic stone structure with modern additions, will be demolished. Demolition preparations are underway. **MR**

news.

the michigan review

Cash-strapped Congress Considers Passing Taxpayer Dollars on to privately-funded Greek Houses for Renovations and Upkeep

By KELLY CAVANAUGH, '10

WHEN ENTERING MOST fraternities on campus, it is likely one will see an array of deteriorating furniture among beer-stained walls and carpets because of party-filled weekends. After sifting through the damage and debris, one may wonder if renovations to fraternities and sororities on campus are justified. According to the U.S. Congress, they are.

The Collegiate Housing Infrastructure Act of 2005, which includes corresponding House and Senate bills, was designed to provide tax-deductible financial contributions to make infrastructure improvements to chapter houses. This financial aid would work in the same way that the tax code currently allows colleges and universities to use tax-deductible contributions to improve university owned student housing on campus.

The current Internal Revenue Code prohibits fraternities and sororities from the same access to financial contributions. Organizations that support fraternities and sororities financially are currently only allowed to raise and/or use current funds to make renovations. Many of the fraternities and sororities are placing emphasis on providing up-to-date "safe" housing, as well as meeting and dining areas for their members.

Dan Nye, president of Pi Kappa Alpha (PIKE) Fraternity, commented that the deterioration of fraternity houses is inevitable due to the sheer number of brothers that occupy the house. Nye stated that many fraternities receive financing for renovations from their vast alumni support; however, the PIKE house is currently using designated housing funds



Houses like Michigan's PIKE would receive money for construction under the House's new legislation

Congress hands out subsidies to some of the best-funded groups on campuses nationwide.

for "regular clean-ups and small repairs." Nye concluded that financial contributions for renovations would be beneficial.

There are reasons to be concerned with accepting federal money. Fraternities and sororities might be exposing themselves to a set of federal requirements, a predicate for state

action and the possibility auditing.

The question of regulating membership also becomes an issue, because it is questionable if sororities and fraternities would still be able to determine membership, or if the restrictions on brothers and sisters and live-in guests change to similarly represent university owned student housing.

While considering the benefits that the potential financial contributions may have and debating the consequences, original motivation behind these proposed bills is unclear. Has Congress suddenly become the good guy or could they just be trying to weasel stiff regulations onto college campuses? The possibility for federal regulations and auditing could both possibly place a stigma on Greek life as a whole on campuses nationwide.

While these bills might improve the safety of fraternities and sororities, a debt-burdened Congress must decide if it is willing to allocate money to organizations whose sole purpose is social and extra-curricular. **MR**

Political Poet Returns to Campus during MLK Day Symposium

By ADAM PAUL, '08

THE POWER CENTER became a stage for a politically-charged performance when poet/musician Sekou Sundiata performed his new composition 51st (Dream) State. The show served as the Memorial Performance for this year's Martin Luther King Symposium. The performance marked the

fifth time that the University Musical Society has sponsored work by Sundiata.

In the program, Sundiata explained, "living in the aftermath of 9/11, I feel an urgent and renewed engagement with what it means to be an American." The composition, which combined spoken word, jazz, vocal performances, and video presentations gave various takes on citizenship. At first glance, the performance seemed prepared to slip into uninteresting pop cynicism. When the stage opened, "Empire" was projected across the screen. After a rolling trailer, a la Star Wars, the prompt asks if this new role "will cost America its soul?"

Sundiata echoed American expansionism in the piece that provides inspiration for the title. He contemplated the ascension of Hawaii and Alaska and the impact of Puerto Rico becoming the 51st state. He quipped that no one ever expected that "the next state would be war."

While some pieces, such as a video that cuts between an elderly Japanese woman and a Middle

Eastern man to connect Japanese internment to modern-day events, seem like recycled critiques, the performance incorporated original commentary. Sundiata delivered a tense poem in the voice of a person in the World Trade Center after the attack that generates sheer terror, even describing a smashed brain as "ticking." One of the female vocalists performed a revamped version of "Aquarius" that prodded America's conflation of religion and state. She sang, "if the English language was good enough for Jesus Christ, then it's good enough for me." This fit with later poems that ironically lamented the rise of multilingualism.

While the performance drew inspiration from modern events, this did not stop it from reaching into history. Sundiata valorized President Lincoln for his ability to "change his mind." The comment obviously pokes fun at the "stay the course" mentality of the White House. In poking fun at the 50's vision of social unity, the vocalists sing the Mickey Mouse Club song while Sundiata recited a string of racial slurs directed at African-Americans.

The performance incorporated a range of musical styles. Soulful jazz and traditional Indian music complemented the varying emotions of the poetry. Late in the show, musicians began to produce unusual sounds. The drummer twirled his symbol with the blunt edge of this drumstick to produce a sketching vibration. Another performer entered numbers into a cell-phone and ran a microphone along the edge of bowl pro-

ducing an echo like blowing over an empty bottle.

The show's conclusion attempted to reconcile its social critiques and establish that an American Dream is still possible. The questioning left the political and became esoteric, asking "what makes us human?" While the show attempted to conclude on a high note with a renewed joy, one could not escape the litany of issues

raised moments before. Yet the instrumental performers continued to play an upbeat jam even after the house-lights rose. **MR**

Sundiata, a recognized performer, made his presentation at the Powers Center during the MLK Week festivities.



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Textbook Forum Addresses Rising Prices, but Offers Few Solutions

Student government, professors, book-sellers discuss the details of costly process

By ANNA MALECKE, '10

What breaks students' budgets? Surprisingly, the biggest budget buster is not energy drinks, or even coffee. In fact, it wreaks its effects on bank accounts and credit card bills at the very beginning of each semester. It is, of course, the unavoidable purchase of textbooks.

The average student spends 900 dollars on textbooks each year. Consequently, the \$8 million textbook industry is flourishing from prices that are rising at more than four times the inflation rate from all finished goods, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index.

This explains why the price of textbooks was chosen as the topic of the first of many campus issues forums jointly hosted by the Michigan Student Assembly (MSA) and the LSA Student Government (LSA-SG). The forum assembled a panel of University professors and administrators, as well as the owner of Shaman Drum Bookstore, to

speak about efforts to decrease the burden of textbook purchases for students. "We want to get this resolved as soon as possible; we know the cost of education continues to rise," said Lester Monts, Senior Vice Provost and Professor of Music.

Of course, the bookstores themselves are easiest to blame for textbook prices. However, Karl Pohrt, owner of Shaman Drum Bookstore, stated that the average bookstore only gains a net profit of 4.9 percent of every dollar they make. University bookstores are feeling the both the frustration of students and the effects of the burgeoning online book business. "It's not as much fun to sell books as it used to be," said Pohrt.

If the stores are not responsible for rising prices, then who is? "In the end, we are looking at a cost coming primarily from publishers and not from stores," said Collette Alexander, a textbook buyer for Shaman Drum. Jadwiga Sipowska, lecturer in the University's chemistry department, said,

"The most money is generated from new editions."

The process is simple. Publishers produce a new version of practically the same text every few years, and they often recall old texts so that only the most recent editions can be purchased. "We aren't allowed to order old editions," said Alexander.

Last December, a textbook task force was chartered at the University of Michigan to address the problem of rising prices. Brenda Gunderson, senior lecturer of statistics, was invited to chair the task force comprised of both students and professors who will gather data, prioritize the issues, and then, hopefully, produce some sort of solution. "We are expected to come up with recommendations by the end of March," Dr. Gunderson said.

Several professors are also individually making their own efforts to protect their students' limited budgets. Dr. Stephen Darwall, Director of the LSA Honors Program, makes all of the titles of the texts studied in

his courses available online prior to the first day of class. Jason Daida, a professor in the College of Engineering, uses slides to supplement his teaching. "We offload the texts and use the printing allocation," he said. As a student once, he understands the predicament many students find themselves in. He said, "I remember having to choose whether I was going to eat or buy the text."

Although MSA and LSA-SG sponsored the forum and brought in interesting perspectives on the textbook price quandary, no solution to the rising prices is in sight, either in Ann Arbor or anywhere else in the nation. Furthermore, the general lack of student involvement in the forum—most attendees were members of student government—demonstrated that, despite well-intentioned efforts, University students may have to grin and bear it, and cough up the cash, for some time. **MR**

University Fundraising Campaign Seeks to Make a 'Difference'

By MARIE COUR, '08

AMONG THE VARIOUS issues that President Mary Sue Coleman championed during the previous fall semester, the Michigan Difference has received the least attention. As the University's main fundraising effort, its level of success and prestige will greatly influence the future of Michigan. The Michigan Difference attracts a substantial amount of U-M's resources, and it is an important, if less-discussed, issue on campus.

Initially launched in 2004, the campaign has raised more than \$2 billion of the \$2.5 billion it hopes to generate in its quest to create a better university. The money will be used to support the University of Michigan system, including the main campus's sister schools in Dearborn and Flint. Although the amount of money the Michigan Difference hopes to raise is startling at first glance, the ultimate goals of the project are rather modest: it wants to raise funds for many campus programs that set U-M apart from

other schools, including academic, athletic, and research programs. For a school that strives to meet the interests of a large community, it is unsurprising that there is such a great demand for resources.

The Student Publications Board wants \$250,000 to create a digital archive of The Michigan Daily. The Clements Library requested funds to create a permanent curatorship of American culinary history, which may be a riveting field with a growing body of research, but it is unlikely to draw large crowds to campus.

However, even when successful, students are not the main beneficiaries of the program. Most of the organizations that requested money will use the largest portion of its funds to support faculty research, with only a small portion of money reserved for students in the department. Scholarships for students receive significantly less funding. By itself, raising money to support the faculty and researchers at the University does not necessarily work against the interests of students. Students will certainly benefit

from better professors and the improved reputation of the departments.

U-M appeals to the public for money by highlighting the accomplishments of former students. On the website promoting

students to help recruit volunteers for the Peace Corps after President John F. Kennedy announced the program on U-M's campus.

All the same, the Michigan Difference plays an important role in the lives of the

Students are not the main beneficiaries of the program. Most of the organizations that requested money will use the largest portion of its funds to support faculty research...

the campaign, they mention many alumni who have made significant contributions to society. Alumni mentioned on the Michigan Difference's website include Dr. Samuel Broder, the doctor who first used AZT to treat HIV; Gerald Ford, the 38th president of the United States; and Betty Smith, the author of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. The campaign also mentions the work of Michigan

students at U-M. There is a link to the website on our homepage, it appears in admissions materials, and its fundraising campaign is visible across campus. On some level, Michigan recognizes the importance of its students, both past and present, as a source of funding. **MR**

Lawmakers Consider Expanding, Reducing Sales Tax

In the face of \$1 billion budget shortfall, Michigan congress looks to tax services

By JONNY SLEMROD, '10

WITH A PROJECTED state budget deficit of \$1 billion for the current and 2007-2008 fiscal years, Michigan Democrats and Republicans alike are brainstorming a viable tax replacement which would help ease the staggering deficit while maintaining funding for vital public services such as public schools and community health programs. Following the elimination of the Single Business Tax (SBT), several politicians and public policy experts are pushing for what they see as a solution to the deficit problem: an extension of Michigan's sales tax to services.

If created and enacted, everything from dry cleaning to appliance repairs would be taxed. However, the tax would exclude medical services. The current tax rate would be reduced from six percent to five percent.

The majority of resistance to a sales tax on services comes from Michigan business organizations, in particular, the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, which acts as a lobbying organization for nearly 6,300 businesses in Michigan. In a press release entitled "Sales Tax on Services: Why It's a Bad Idea," the chamber noted several reasons why the tax should not be implemented.

One major concern the chamber presents is that a tax on services would disproportionately hurt small or medium-sized businesses that may not have the resources to provide for important services such as legal representation without outsourcing. Unlike larger businesses and corporations (for example, GM or Ford), they do not have in-house legal staffs whose services would not be subject to taxation. According to the Chamber of Commerce, this would shift the tax burden towards smaller businesses, and

would contribute to what they call an "anti-business" climate in Michigan.

Some fear "tax pyramiding," a term which describes a situation in which businesses are subject to the sales tax multiple times throughout the production of their goods. In an ideal plan, the sales tax would only be applied in the transfer of the goods from the business to the final consumer.

From a purely economic standpoint, a sales tax on services makes sense. If it is assumed that all businesses benefit from the public goods and services which contribute to our state's infrastructure, there is no reason why only stores selling retail goods should be required to contribute. Additionally, it makes sense to have a broad tax base with a reduced rate, which is what a bill would encompass.

However, administering and defining the tax may create difficulty for the government.

Florida and Massachusetts both adopted a sales tax on services in 1987 and 1990, respectively. Both instances were met with fierce resistance and were repealed quickly. Michigan legislators would need to carefully study these cases to learn from their mistakes and to craft a tax ideal for Michigan's unique economy.

If a sales tax on services is enacted in Michigan, the economic climate for some businesses may change drastically. The idea brings a new hope for legislators to help eliminate the rising state deficit, but it could also pose pitfalls to the government in the definition and enforcement of the tax. If carefully constructed, the tax could play a major part in alleviating Michigan's budget woes. Regardless of opposition, the sales tax is being strongly considered by legislators. **MR**

news/opinion.

the michigan review

"DIVERSITY" FROM PAGE 1

of town.

Provost Lester Monts, co-chair of the Task Force, was one of the few members to respond to our questions. According to Monts, "The invitation to join the Diversity Blueprints Task Force was issued by President Coleman to draw together some of the University's most experienced and creative authorities on the academic life of the University, diversity, and related topics," he stated.

Additionally, Professor Scott Page stated that he originally proposed the idea of having a Diversity Task Force. "My original proposal was for an open process to which everyone could contribute to helping Michigan a better place," he said.

One committee member seemed confused about the selection process. "I don't even know how I was selected to serve on the committee," said Professor David Munson, a committee member.

Provost Monts explained the delay in launching the committee, "It can and does take a good amount of time to choose and invite members to join a committee, invite

any additional members needed, and then schedule a meeting that involves a large number of people with very busy schedules."

Regardless of the questions surrounding the composition of the task force, the group began a series of public hearings. Almost all of the committee members attended and the few visitors that were present were given a chance to state their thoughts on ways to promote diversity on campus. While some ideas were constructive and creative, the forum quickly devolved into a rally pledging to continue combating the legality of Proposal 2.

Representatives from the activist group

By Any Means Necessary stated that their fight against Proposal 2 would not halt.

"We are not going to accept resegregation. The public has no way to take away our first amendment rights," said Luke Massey, the national co-chair for BAMN.

Mary Cruz Lopez, the co-chair for BAMN at U-M went even further. "Proposal 2 got on the ballot because of fraud and deception. We have investigated the U-M campus and have found students and professors that signed to get Proposal 2 on the ballot because they were purposely deceived," she said. **MR**

This Isn't Your Father's Liberalism

BY NICK CHEOLAS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

LAST NOVEMBER, AT an editor's conference in Arizona, I spoke about my experience as a conservative journalist on a predominantly liberal campus. In front of several generations of conservatives, I focused on what I have come to perceive as a sharp dichotomy between the conservative experience in liberal academia today and that experience a decade or two ago.

The difference is simple. No longer are conservative students shouted down in classrooms or expelled because of the nature of their views. Now, college students face a much more subtle form of liberal indoctrination – one that manifests itself in seemingly benign courses at elite universities, and one that few social science majors can avoid.

Last month's Michigan Daily provided a glimpse into one of these courses. A front page article entitled "Class Action" examined Professor Buzz Alexander's class, "Incarceration & Citizenship" – a course that, according to the Daily, seeks to "foster activism."

The formula is pretty simple: lecture students on the "plight of American prisoners." Take them to local area prisons where they can work on art projects with prisoners. Teach them some nifty little facts and statistics, and voila! A couple months later you've got kids handcuffing themselves to each other, fasting on the Diag, and telling the victims of violent crimes that their attackers should receive psychological counseling, not jail time.

Of course, it is not ridiculous to hold these particular views, nor is it wrong to stage protests. What is bothersome is University courses seek to foster activism rather than educate students.

These students take to the Diag to spit cute little statistics like "seventy-two percent of all illicit drug users are white, yet blacks constitute 58 percent of those incarcerated for drug felonies!"

Of course, they could just as easily scream "Blacks make up only 12.3 percent of the population, but constitute 58 percent of those incarcerated for drug felonies." Both statements are true. Both statements are based on statistics. And neither is any more than a simple talking point that ignores the complexity of the issue.

But it is exactly this complexity that should be tackled in a course on the American criminal justice system. Surely, Professor Alexander covers this in his lectures.

Only, according to his students, Alexander "rarely lectures."

Instead, per the course guide, the course focuses on "continual deepening and developing of a class discussion that is grounded in the basic questions: who are we, who am I in one of the most incarcerating states in the most incarcerating nation in the world" and intends to "broaden students' understanding of incarceration and to motivate and engage them in acts of citizenship."

What?

So instead of a professor transmitting knowledge to his or her students – also known as "teaching" – students deeply discuss "who they are" and engage in "acts of citizenship."

Admittedly, I've never enrolled in Professor Alexander's course. But I have taken many courses that have taken a much more subtle approach to spurring liberal activism.

Last semester, I enthusiastically enrolled in History 393 – Detroit Politics and Community Organizing, hoping that by taking a history course on Detroit, I could learn about history and Detroit.

Instead, we got a barrage of guest speakers pining for a "pluralist commonwealth," demanding immediate withdrawal from Iraq, praising "socially-responsible enterprises," and rapping.

For our final exam, we were to develop a five-year plan (no pun intended) for living in Detroit, and, of course, explain how we would "relate to the community." I received a disappointingly low grade on the project, which my professor partially attributed to the fact that "[my] own role tended to get left out" of the discussion.

I'm sorry. I thought my history course on Detroit would focus on things like "history" and "Detroit."

So maybe conservatives are no longer being shouted down in classes or ridiculed on the Diag. Instead, they are stuck in a liberal activist training camp more commonly known as college, where they are reminded over and over again about racism, injustice, oppression, and inequality.

Then, when they leave, they're told, as President Coleman told December gradu-


ates, "Don't wait, and change the world."


Well working to outlaw abortion would be a fine example of "changing the world." But I don't think that's what anybody around here had in mind.

Of course, there is nothing inherently wrong with supporting liberal policies. I support some myself. But many college students aren't supporting these policies based on an analysis of the complexity of the issue. They are pushed in that direction by classes that promote liberal activism under the guise of "learning."

It is no wonder why students at American universities struggle to comprehend the history of our nation and its institutions. We've eschewed teaching and learning in favor of discussion groups about the plight of murderers and vague concepts of "social justice," "change," and "diversity."

In less than a year, I'll be in law school. Here's to hoping I'm taught more about law, and less about myself. **MR**


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End of an Era

Teen Favorites The OC and TRL to Depart Airwaves

Once strong contenders for young viewers, two television shows that served as cultural icons will soon be gone

By AMANDA NICHOLS, '07

It's the end of an era, or perhaps the long national nightmare is over. Either way, teen favorite The OC is about to depart television airwaves for good, and it appears MTV's Total Request Live will soon follow suit after.

For the first few seasons, The OC somehow inexplicably reached the "cultural phenomenon" level. Ratings were high, the show was witty and well-written, its cast members were suddenly A-list celebrities, and the program even spawned a look-a-like reality show



Does anybody want their MTV anymore?

in MTV's Laguna Beach: The Real Orange County. Bands—including the Ann Arbor-

based Tally Hall—vied to have their music on the show, for it meant almost certain and sudden stardom; perhaps the best example of this is Death Cab for Cutie. Relatively unknown in the mainstream music scene, Death Cab was a favorite of everyone's favorite dorky emo kid and OC main character, Seth Cohen (played by Adam Brody), as well as of the show's creator, Josh Schwartz. Schwartz even convinced Death Cab to perform on the show itself and, suddenly, millions of teenage girls everywhere were humming "Sound of Settling."

But, oh, how the mighty fall. The four main characters were splitting up to go to different colleges, and such an experience is an almost certain death sentence for a program. The OC couldn't remain long at the precipice where it was so perilously situated, but few fans of the show imagined the fall would be so drastic. Perhaps the most emblematic moment of this sharp decline occurred in the season three finale last May, when Marissa Cooper, the rich girl-turned-lesbian-turned-coke-addict drama queen,

played by Mischa Barton, died in a car crash. Even novice television viewers know that killing off a main character means the show has certainly "jumped the shark."

Along with the seemingly imminent cancellation of TRL, what does this once-popular show's departure signify? Perhaps a culture shift in popular entertainment has occurred. Instead of a purely soapy drama

Along with the quickly approaching cancellation of TRL, what does this once-popular show's departure signify? Perhaps a culture shift in popular entertainment has occurred.

like The OC, maybe teen audiences are drawn toward Ugly Betty, a show with an underlying substantive message about cul-

tural norms. But then again, perhaps the hot docs of Seattle Grace Hospital and Grey's Anatomy have simply lured away traditional OC viewers.

Regardless of the destination of the show's fleeting viewers, television executives must come up with a new formula to target teen and young adult viewers. While many college students grew up watching TRL after school, determining their musical tastes from truncated music videos played between clips of screaming girls waving signs in Times



The cast in better days—before coke habits and college admission decisions ruined their lives.

Square or muscular boys skipping school and yelling shout-outs to their friends, subsequent generations will have to find a new avenue of entertainment. More importantly, they must also find new harbingers of the "teen values" that these shows almost effortlessly encompassed for so long. **MR**

"HAPPINESS"
FROM PAGE 10

-tivities. It sounds like the perfect class — no exams and, more or less, a free therapy session. However, some academics argue that teaching happiness is not really possible and that it is simply a therapy session. According to communications professor, Russell Neuman, you can't really teach someone to be happy. Neuman likens it to teaching someone baseball saying, "You can teach them about baseball but that won't make them good baseball players." He does conclude, however, that, "...you can teach students a lot about what is elusive and what is real about subjective well being."

But what if it were possible to teach happiness? How would it affect the campus community — in particular, the University of Michigan? LSA junior, and biopsychology major, Karolin Bakow said, "I think a 'happiness course' would completely change the atmosphere around here, especially during the winter because so many people get depressed." Although this is a valid point and the lessons of the class probably would affect the atmosphere on campus, could such a class have any real academic standing?

Psychology professor Stephanie Preston, teaches Psychology 447 which focuses on emotions. The class is meant to take a look at the evolutionary aspects, empirical evidence of the effects of emotions on one's behavior, along with other aspects of emotions and their relation to psychology. However, it is more than just a therapy session for students — there are exams, reading materials, and lectures. Professor Neuman also teaches a similar class, American Culture 200, Academic Paradox. Of this class he says, "The Academic Paradox course very clearly instructs students to draw on materi-

Idiocracy Shows Farce of Future

By MICHAEL O'BRIEN, '08

THE RELEASE OF a witty, dark comedy by Mike Judge, the director of Office Space and the creator of King of the Hill would seem, on paper, like it is destined for box-office glory. But this was not the case with the virtually straight-to-DVD movie, Idiocracy, the latest by Judge which seems sure to become a cult classic.

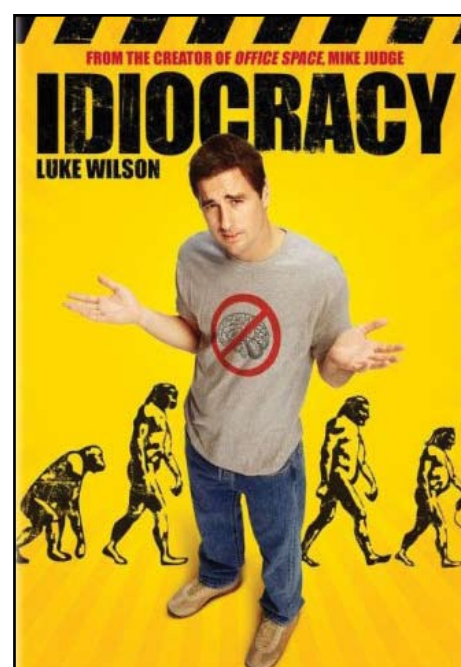
Idiocracy is the story of Joe Bauers (Luke Wilson), a man who is literally the most statistically average Joe in the Army. He and another volunteer, a lady of the night named Rita played by SNL's Maya Rudolph, join an Army experiment that is supposed to place them in hibernation for a year.

Instead, by some oversight, Joe and Rita wake up 500 years later to find that the world is overrun by absolute fools. How did this happen? The omniscient narrator explains. At the dawn of the 21st Century, with no natural predators left, human evolution no longer rewarded the best and brightest, but

als from lecture and readings in developing their strategic vision. If that is done, it is entirely legitimate."

So, yes, there are classes at the University of Michigan which are in a similar line as the one at George Mason. However, these classes actually require some degree of work and thinking. While we are not likely to see any courses that let emotions rule the classroom, students at the University can still benefit from more structured courses when they apply them to their lives outside the classroom. **MR**

rather those who reproduced the most. Since individuals of low IQs tend to have higher fertility than the smarter, we find that society has devolved in 500 years to make people stupider. Standard English has devolved into "a hybrid of hillbilly, valley girl, and inner-



city slang." Joe is literally the smartest man alive.

Judge's dystopian comedy proves a subtly biting critique of the present by depicting the world towards which we're slouching. Judge's future is a world where everyone's that dumb kid from high school. In the future of "Uh-Merica," advertising is literally everywhere—from clothes, to the American flag. The "President of America" is

a pro-wrestler and porn star, who speaks before the "House of Representin.'" The court system is something between Judge Judy and Jerry Springer. All food is fast food (the chain Carl Jr.'s advertising slogan is, "Fuck you! I'm eating!"). Additionally, all water has been replaced by the sports drink Brawndo, causing a massive dust bowl. (Joe asks why the plants aren't watered. Someone responds, "But Brawndo's got what plants crave—electrolytes.")

The movie suggests that Americans are being increasingly mesmerized by cheap sex, violence, entertainment, advertising and food. The future is one that is willingly dominated by major corporations and big-box stores. (Joe's lawyer went to law school at Costco. He got in because his dad was an alumnus.) In a world where American Idol is a runaway hit, and with marketing companies constantly looking for new places to advertise, Idiocracy's plot seems strangely plausible.

You have not heard about Idiocracy because after it was produced, its distributor, Fox, sat on it for a year. Its screen-testing suggested that it would not play well to the movie-goers, and numerous corporations objected to Judge's skewering of them by the film. So Fox eventually released it to an extremely small market, with literally zero trailers or advertising for the movie. It was then sent straight to DVD.

The irony, of course, is delightful. A film that challenges the masses and the companies in a hilarious way is eventually done in by their dulled senses and antipathy, respectively. Maybe we're headed down the path towards an idiocracy, after all. **MR**

feature.

the michigan review

A First Step for Regional Transit: Multi-Party Negotiations May Yield Valuable Ann Arbor-Detroit Rail Link

Amtrak and SEMCOG must meet with Norfolk Southern to plan for more frequent inter-city service



Brian Biglin/The Michigan Review

An Amtrak train prepares to depart the Detroit station after delivering passengers from Chicago, Kalamazoo, Ann Arbor, and other points. Ann Arbor to Detroit service may become much more frequent in the near future.

BY BRIAN BIGLIN, '08

THE FIRST AND most important link in a long-studied but never-implemented regional transit plan for southeast Michigan—a commuter-rail connection between Detroit and Ann Arbor—could be closer to becoming a reality than ever.

Amtrak Media Relations Manager Marc Magliari said that “productive” negotiations between Amtrak and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) regarding the creation of a frequent connection between the two cities occurred when the two parties met in Detroit last month. SEMCOG is looking to create a demonstration line which, if successful, will become permanent and will receive \$100 million in federal funding. Amtrak currently links Ann Arbor and Detroit with three times-daily trains in each direction as part of its Wolverine route which extends from Pontiac to Chicago; because of its infrequency, this service is not widely used as a Detroit-Ann Arbor connector.

It is unclear whether the current Amtrak station in Detroit’s New Center district will be the endpoint for the new, more frequent linkage, or if a downtown destination accessed by slightly different rails will be pursued, Magliari said. In either case, Amtrak and SEMCOG will need to continue to consult with the owners of the rails linking the two cities, the most prominent of which is Norfolk Southern. Magliari said that Norfolk Southern is engaging in the discussion and is a willing partner.

“Norfolk Southern remains willing to discuss any proposal involving commuter service between Detroit and Ann Arbor,” said Rudy Husband, Director of Public Relations for Norfolk Southern Corporation. Norfolk Southern has certain conditions that it expects to be met if SEMCOG contracts Amtrak for this frequent-departure Detroit-Ann Arbor link, including compensation for the use of their assets, liability protection,

and a guarantee that they will not be put in a position of subsidizing commuter operations.

The Virginia-based Norfolk Southern runs six freight trains per day along the rail shared by Amtrak, so it is widely thought that they will be able to allow the much more

SEMCOG is looking to create a demonstration line which, if successful, will become permanent and will receive \$100 million in federal funding.

frequent Amtrak schedule that SEMCOG is pursuing for its demonstration line.

For Amtrak, which already contracts commuter rail services in Connecticut, Maryland, and California, the anticipated costs and equipment needs of the new project are a primary concern.

Magliari added that the Michigan Department of Transportation, which subsidizes a once-daily Amtrak connection from Chicago to Lansing and Port Huron, is also a player in the current Detroit-Ann Arbor negotiations.

Metropolitan Detroit has slowly lost reliable mass transit since the Detroit Street Rail system, linking downtown Detroit to the suburbs with frequent stops along lines following all of the major ‘wheel spoke’ thoroughfares, was slowly dismantled in the last half of the 20th century due to a variety of reasons. Major passenger rail once funneled directly into downtown Detroit, but now, the only remaining line, the aforementioned Amtrak Wolverine line, which is more suited to business travel to and from Chicago, makes infrequent stops in New Center.

Overall ridership of this AMTRAK route increased 11.5 percent in 2005, with numbers for 2006 not yet released, according to AMTRAK. The Ann Arbor depot, located in Kerrytown, was the state’s busiest station.

Even if frequent rail service between Detroit and Ann Arbor becomes a reality, much of metro Detroit will still be without bus service, let alone any train service.

Metro Detroit transit is limited to the under-funded Detroit Department of Transportation bus system and the SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transit) bus system, which connects select suburban destinations to the central city. SMART, however, has never taken off in car-happy suburban Detroit, and is used by roughly 40,000 per day in a metro area of many millions, according to SMART’s last annual report. Recently, Livonia (a suburb west

of Detroit) residents voted to oust SMART service from its city, sending a signal that it desires no such transit link to Detroit.

The lack of a reliable, comprehensive transit system for the metropolitan area is seen as an indicator of the disharmony among municipal factions in metro Detroit, and it goes hand in hand with the automobile-based built environment where the majority of southeast Michigan residents live.

Suburban sprawl has afflicted all metro areas, but metro Detroit has experienced one of the most dramatic regional population shifts in American history, leading to the majority of its population now being located in a low-density landscape surrounding the city limits at a considerable distance. It is hard for any transit system to cover such a sprawling landscape, and even harder to get people to use it in an automobile-gear infrastructure. In addition, while downtown Detroit is a major economic center housing corporate and professional headquarters, there are other employment centers in the region, including Southfield, Livonia, Warren, Troy, and others. Thus, there is no clear destination for any critical mass of commuters. Needless to say, traffic patterns in the area are very complex, and SEMCOG has had its work cut out for it in planning transit solutions.

Amid all of these complications, Detroit and Ann Arbor have emerged as favored endpoints for a possible commuter rail line, because they are already linked by rails and have a significant corridor of jobs and the international airport between them. Although the most recent SEMCOG study showed, not surprisingly, that interest in such a link for daily commuting purposes was not high enough to justify the building of such a system, the availability of so many rails has made an experiment, which could provide much more information than additional costly studies, very appealing.

There are many fronts to the regional transit issue for Detroit, but SEMCOG has signaled that the Ann Arbor to Detroit link is a major priority, and with active negotiations underway, the fate of this route will be a bellwether for the future expansion, or lack thereof, of transit in southeast Michigan. **MR**



Brian Biglin/The Michigan Review

The Amtrak station at Woodward and Baltimore in Detroit may be the endpoint for a possible Ann Arbor-Detroit commuter-style link.