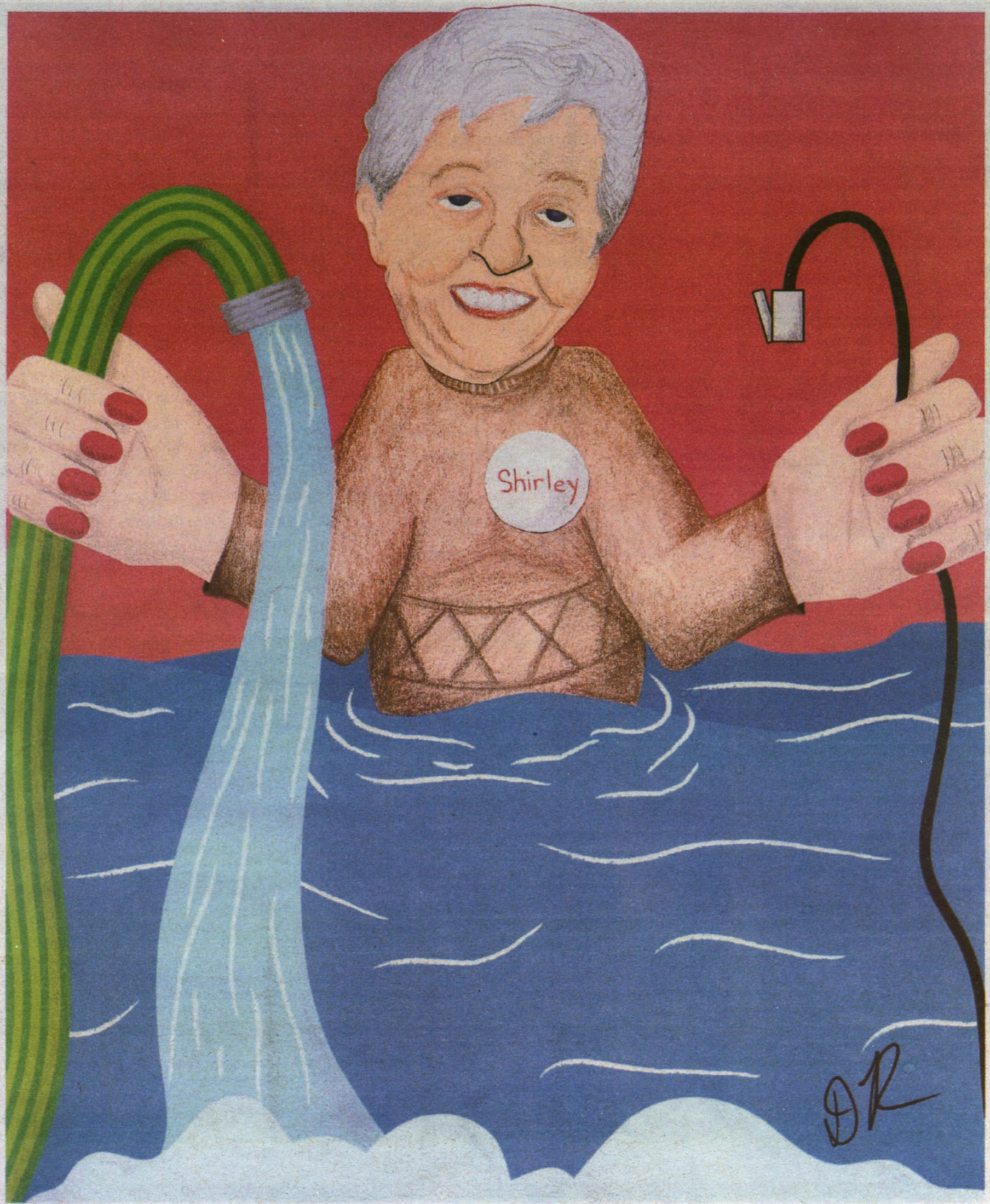


The

Patriot

Vol. 5 Issue 7

February 2008



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**LIKE WHAT YOU SEE?
HATE WHAT YOU SEE?**

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**MEETINGS MONDAYS
6:00-7:00 PM
SAC 308**

Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

Thank you once again for picking up the latest issue of *The Patriot*. I hope you enjoy what we have in store for you this and every time you read us. It's been a while since I last wrote to you and so I want to share some exciting news with you about *The Patriot* and our parent group, the Enduring Freedom Alliance.

First, I want to tell you about what we're doing to improve the quality of our newspaper. This semester we've brought on more talented reporters, opinion writers, artists, photographers and others. You'll notice our covers are much more colorful and creative than they used to be. That's thanks to the impressive skill of our in-house artist, Dan Rubin. You'll also notice that the layout is cleaner and that we have more original photos and graphics. That too is thanks to the hard-working staff and editors we've brought on board.

Some things have stayed the same, however. We are still bringing you incisive and thought-provoking articles and opinions. We've had our focus on national politics for the last few months (who hasn't?) and that kind of commentary will always be a part of *The Patriot*, but we recognize that there are very important matters to report on and discuss right here at home in Stony Brook. This slight shift in course is reflected in this month's articles. Take a look and tell us what you think by sending us feedback through our website or email. Even better, if you want to play a part in growing *The Patriot*, write for us or help us in some other way. We meet every Monday at 6 PM in SAC 308. Contrary to popular opinion, we are not the 'Republican Newspaper'. Our alle-

giances are to the founding principles of our country, not any particular party. Yes, that means most of us are conservative or libertarian, but we welcome you to disagree with us too. Civil discourse and the debate is the best way to refine our arguments and come up with more informed opinions.

Clearly, we think talking about ideas is very important, but acting on those ideas is equally if not more important. For that reason, we've undertaken a major fundraising campaign to support our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the help of the organization Adopt-A-Platoon we are getting students at Stony Brook to write letters of support and encouragement to the thirteen soldiers we've 'adopted' and to assemble weekly care packages full of goodies that the soldiers miss dearly while fighting for our freedom abroad. We feel very good about helping the brave men and women who protect us everyday and sending kind words and some comforts from home is the very least we can do. We know that many of you feel the same kind of pride and appreciation for the troops as we do, and we invite you to help us in our efforts. Over the next few weeks you'll see more and more drop-boxes for letters and care packages in some buildings and in your dorms. Please be so kind to write a letter or donate something so simple as a deck of cards or bar of soap to send to the guys and gals overseas. If you want to play a bigger role in this campaign, let us know and we'd love to have you on board.

Sincerely,

Alex Chamesian

Editor-in-Chief

The Patriot

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Our Mission: The goal of *The Patriot* is to offer an alternative point of view to the students of Stony Brook University. It is a paper dedicated to raising awareness of student issues on campus, and conservative/libertarian issues on the national scene. While it does not actively seek controversy, *The Patriot* strives to offer opinions and news that will encourage the students of this campus to ask themselves what their true values are. It is dedicated to building upon and fostering the conservative and libertarian views that are strong among so many of us, yet suppressed in our community. But ideology aside, all of our news will be bound to three standards; we will always be *factual, sensible, and reasonable*.

Send questions and comments to info@stonybrookpatriot.com

The Patriot is a paper of the Enduring Freedom Alliance:
<http://www.ic.sunysb.edu/clubs/efa/>

Disclaimer: The views expressed in the opinions columns are not necessarily the opinions of *The Patriot* or its editorial staff as a whole.

Support Our Troops!

Dear Readers,

Whether or not you support the wars and military operations America engages in does not mean you cannot support the brave men and women fighting in them. The troops are the people, and THE reason, I am free to write in this newspaper and the reason you are free to disagree or agree with what I write in it. It is they who fight, have fought and (too) many times died for your freedom to have a voice and opinion. Remember that, despite what you may think, as General Douglas MacArthur once said, "The soldier above all others prays for peace, for it is the soldier who must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

As freedom loving and patriotic Americans, we at The Patriot have long felt the need to do something, anything, for our brave men and women fighting and dying for for everything we value and hold dear. After doing some research, we found and now have joined a group called Adopt-A-Platoon, a soldier support group wherein a simple card or personal letter and an occasional care package consisting of basic things such as shampoo, batteries, and magazines is all that they ask. We at The Patriot felt that, at the very least, we could muster up the will to do this for our troops who have done so much more for us. We have adopted a small platoon of several soldiers and we encourage those of you reading to help us in our efforts to support the troops with us. One letter or one card means a small, but most appreciated and needed, break from the brutal and harsh realities of war. If you are interested in contributing to our efforts to support the troops, feel free to send one over to us via email at sbpatriot@gmail.com or if you would like to handwrite one feel free to come to our meetings in SAC 308 on Mondays at 6:00 PM to drop it off. Again, writing a simple letter is the very least we can do for our brave men and women in the

armed forces.

If you would like to learn more about our efforts and about Adopt-A-Platoon itself, send an e-mail to sbpatriot@gmail.com and address it Attn: Derek Mordente. I will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

For some basic information about Adopt-A-Platoon, find below the main part of its mission statement:

"The AdoptaPlatoon Soldier Support Effort™ founded in 1998 is a nonprofit 501C-3 organization managed nationwide by volunteer mothers to ensure that deployed United States Service members in all branches of the military are not forgotten by providing needed mail support and to promote patriotism in our schools and communities. To provide a better deployment quality of life, lift morale, and assist military families, the AAP created projects that meet the need of military requests, established special projects for holidays, and assigns individual morale lifting mail support to service members of all branches of the U.S. military serving their Nation around the world."

Sincerely
Derek Mordente
Senior Editor



Heat and Hot Water - Not Included

By Drew Art

Three thousand dollars is a large investment for the average college student. Here at Stony Brook it's the commitment nearly every student makes who wishes to live on campus, yet the university has failed to make a solid commitment of its own. What I mean by a lack of commitment is the failure of the university to guarantee such extravagances as hot water and heat.

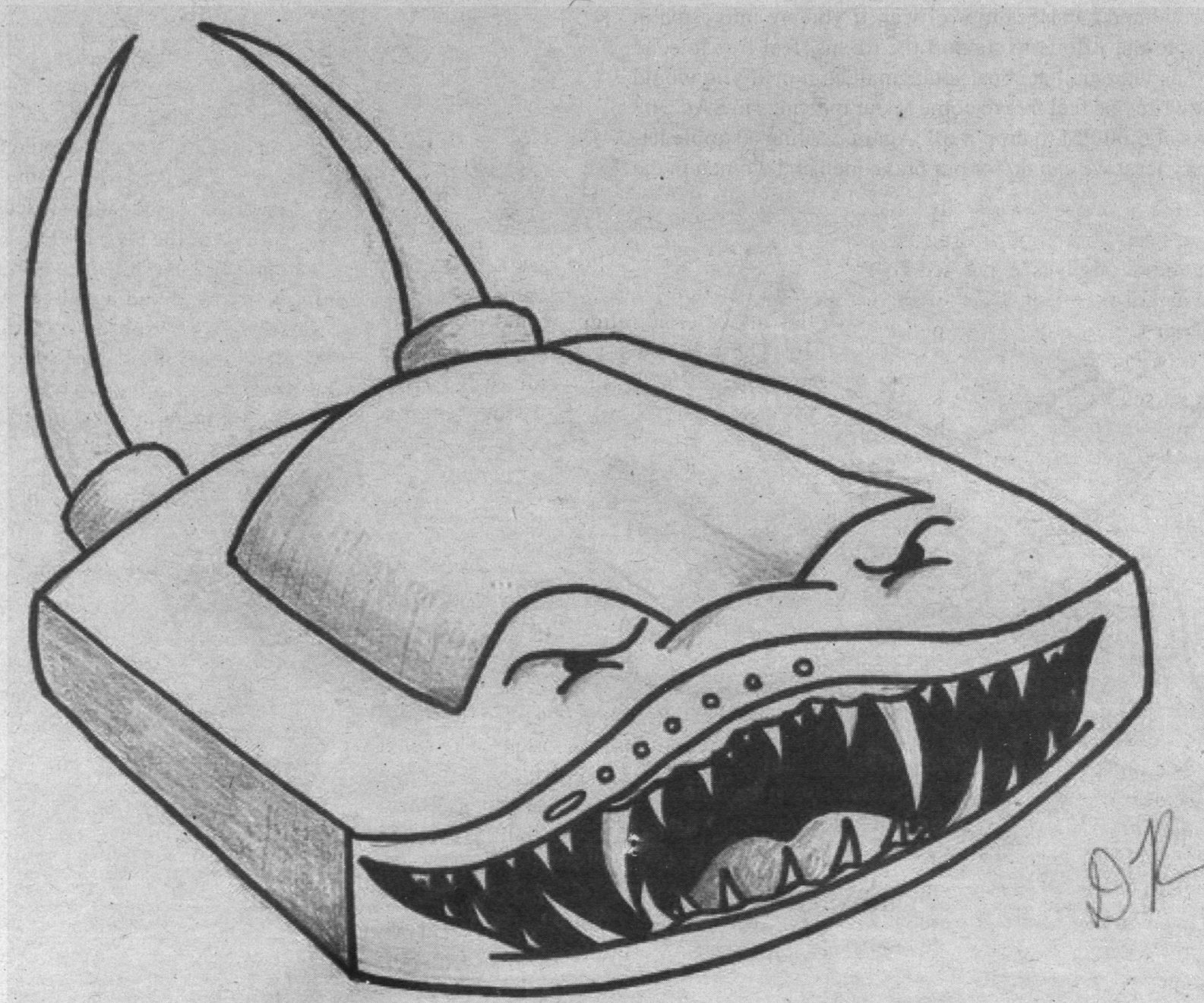
I'm referring to the recent shutdown of heat and hot water to the residents of Roosevelt Quad and Kelly Quad, excluding those in both Schick and Hamilton Colleges. Addressing the situation coolly and without regard to human comfort, the university offered such alternatives such as use of the showers in the Sports Center or bussing to the distant South Hampton campus. Residents risk not only losing their heating any given weekend, but not being told about it until it's already gone

- apparently early notice isn't included in that three thousand. Perhaps accustomed to Stony Brook's habit of failing to deliver on services, many residents of Roosevelt and Kelly chose to remain in their buildings and rough it out, maybe even wait for some semblance of a sincere apology from the school.

For those of you living in Tabler, you probably didn't see any notice about the internet blackouts as you didn't have the internet. Of course, the university has little reason to apologize as it's your fault for having routers; that's right hang your head in shame residents, you made your networks now lay in them. The nearest sinc site, the Tabler Arts Center, which might have eased some of the pressure off of students facing blackouts, also lost its connection to the internet. Coincidence, or malicious attack by students with routers? Stony Brook, above punishing Tabler's

guilty residents, however, handled the situation calmly and offered students the following options: N/A. It's good to see that a university racing into the electronic age is willing to offer speedy solutions to its students.

In all seriousness it's time for the university to take responsibility for the problems going on around campus. Offering meager alternatives to students does little to make up for their losses and pointing fingers back at students does nothing to fix the school's issues. It's time for the school to return the payments its students have made for services which it has failed to provide. A big commitment for the school to make? Yes, but no bigger than the commitment the cold disconnected students of Stony Brook have already made themselves.



SBU Professor Accepts Award From Iran

By Derek Mordente

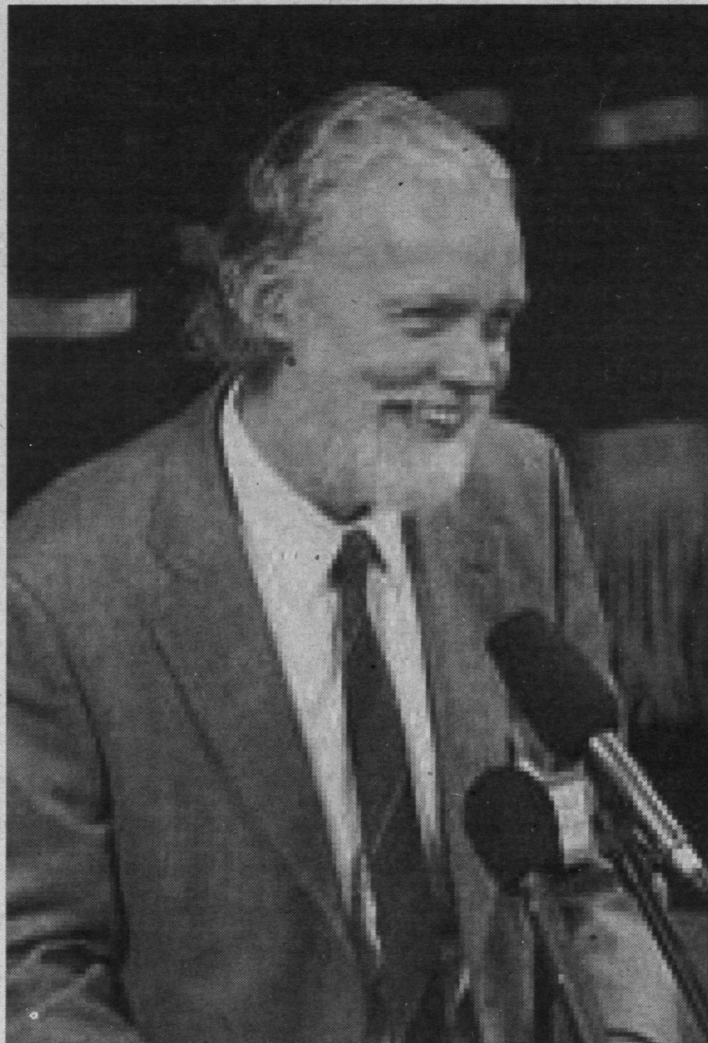
This past December, three Americans by the names of Carl Ernst, Miriam Galston, and William Chittick were presented with the Farabi International Award, an award granted for academic and scholarly achievements in the field of Islamic Studies. This is noteworthy because this award was given to these three individuals by the Islamist Fascist "President" of the Islamic "Republic" of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. What makes this more interesting to us, however, is that the third individual mentioned above, William Chittick, is a professor of religious studies right here at Stony Brook.

All three have accepted the award and according to a report by www.newsobserver.com, Carl Ernst responded to anticipated criticism of his acceptance of the award by claiming that although he "cringed" at some of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's "policies," he found the award to be strictly "academic" and apolitical. As Robert Spencer so aptly states on his website, Jihad Watch, "as if Tehran [the capital of Iran] these days were crawling with disinterested academics who are in no way co-opted by the regime." Now, since William Chittick did not decline the award, one can only believe that, at best, he is in virtual agreement with the sentiments expressed by his fellow award recipient, Carl Ernst. I urge Professor Chittick to correct me if I am in any way incorrect.

Being a scholar of religious studies as well as one who specializes in the area of Islam who received his Ph.D. in Iran and who taught in Iran during the 1970s, I find it hard to believe William Chittick is completely naïve regarding the current state of Iran and the nature of its psychopathically anti-Semitic "President," Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Here are some things to consider about "President" Ahmadinejad and his "policies" if you know nothing about him (I use quotes around the word "president" because the idea of this man "presiding" over a democratic government is as ludicrous as considering Fidel Castro the "President" of Cuba). He has commented that Israel is a "disgraceful stain [on] the Islamic world", that needed to be "wiped from the pages of history." He has made

other profusely anti-Semitic statements such as denying the Holocaust when he said, "They [the West] have invented a



myth that Jews were massacred and place this above God, religions, and the prophets. The West has given more significance to the myth of the genocide of the Jews, even more significant than God, religion, and the prophets." He also has some nice views about the United States (which I'm sure the Academic Left swoon over) such as, "You [the United States], who have used nuclear weapons against innocent people, who have used uranium ordnance in Iraq, should be tried as war criminals in courts," and "The Zionists and their protectors are the most detested people in all of humanity, and the hatred is increasing every day." Finally, USA Today reported in October of 2008 that "Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad predicted that the imminent collapse of international "bullies" would be a good opportunity to spread Islam and Iran's Islamic Revolution." Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is in complete agreement with many positions held by Adolf Hit-

ler, especially regarding Jews, Zionism, Judeo-Christian Western values, Western democratic institutions, and the desire to dominate international neighbors. The two have often been compared to each other regarding the stark similarities of their views since Ahmadinejad's "election" in 2005. Indeed, On December 11-13, 2006, American Neo-Nazi David Duke was a welcome guest at a Holocaust Denial meeting called the International Conference to Review the Global Vision of the Holocaust in Iran's capital, Tehran, which was hosted by Ahmadinejad. At the conference, Duke stated, "The Holocaust is the device used as the pillar of Zionist imperialism, Zionist aggression, Zionist terror, and Zionist murder." Does anyone doubt Ahmadinejad totally agreed with his anti-Semitic soulmate?

Now, given all of this, should William Chittick really have accepted this award? If not based solely on Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's "policies," should not the fact that America is currently at war with the very people Ahmadinejad supports and lauds deter Chittick from accepting the award? Would he have accepted a similar award from former Iraqi "President" Saddam Hussein if the intentions of the award seemed apolitical? Finally, I have a very hard time believing this award had apolitical implications since www.newsobserver.com stated that while Ahmadinejad presented the award, the recipients "are chosen by a committee within the government ministry of science, research, and technology."

This particular Islamic Republic government ministry is part of a government run by an anti-Semitic, anti-American, anti-Western Islamist Fascist and supremely presided over by an authoritarian Islamic Mullah hell bent on the destruction of the West and the establishment of Sharia law around the world. What a republic. What a farce. William Chittick, you should be ashamed of yourself.

Hour Cuts At Stony Brook Dining Halls

By Amanda Gerani

Alison Huenger, a sophomore living in Mount College in Roth Quad, used to enjoy getting coffee from Dunkin Donuts in the Tabler Café every morning before her 8:30 a.m. class.

Due to recent cuts in the operating hours, Huenger cannot get coffee in the morning anymore because the Tabler Café, which suffered one of the most severe decreases in operating hours, does not open until 9:00 AM Monday through Thursday and is closed Friday through Sunday.

“One day I trekked all the way to Tabler, and it was closed,” Huenger said, “and it’s annoying because Starbucks isn’t open either at that time.”

To make matters worse, the weekend hours of operation for many dining locations on campus were either decreased or eliminated. Stony Brook has been making efforts to try to break away from the “commuter school” stereotype and having minimal options for food on the weekends is not helping this cause.

“When you’re hanging out on Saturdays and want to just run to Dunkin Donuts to get a coffee or something, you can’t now,” Michael Hagler, a sophomore living in Tabler Quad said, “they could be making a lot of business” from students who stay on campus during the weekends.

Many students on campus believe that this decrease in operating hours for campus dining locations is the

result of the 2008-09 Deficit Reduction Plan proposed by Governor David A. Patterson on Nov. 12, 2008.

According to the State University of New York website, the Deficit Reduction Plan calls for an annual undergraduate tuition increase of approximately \$620 per student at all SUNY schools, totaling a savings of \$62 million for the 2008-09 fiscal year. So far in the 2008-09 fiscal year, \$210 million was cut from the SUNY system, which includes 64 campuses and three hospitals.

These reductions in spending in the budget are part of Governor Patterson’s plan to close the current \$5.2 billion New York State budget deficit gap within a two-year time period.

According to Angela Agnello, the director of marketing and communications for the Faculty Student Association, Campus Dining Services does not receive state funding. “It is self-sustaining,” Agnello said, and as a result the SUNY budget cuts do not effect campus dining.

Another common misconception among Stony Brook students is that there was a hiring freeze enacted after the budget cuts, which accounted for the decrease in operating hours of certain locations.

Roth Food Court, which had been closed during the 2007-08 school year for renovations, reopened in October of 2008 – around the same time the budget cuts occurred.

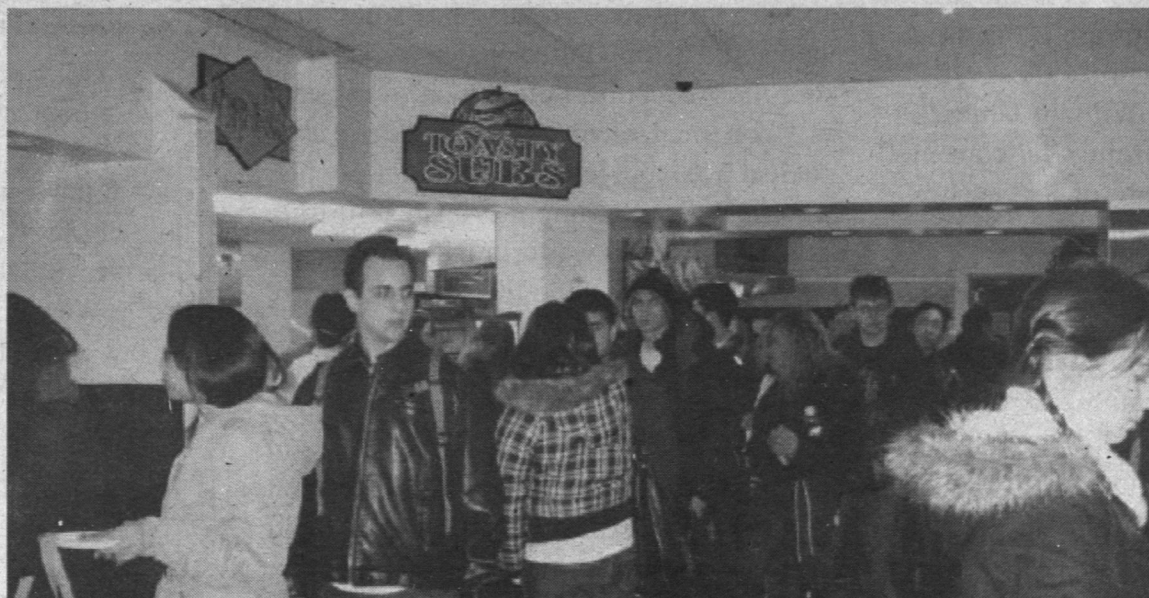
“The hours of operation for Campus Dining Service locations changed when Roth Food Court opened to reallocate staff that had been moved to other dining units while Roth was undergoing a renovation,” Agnello said.

However, students have been noticing more crowding and longer lines in certain dining locations – especially the ones that are open at times when many others are closed.

“They should hire more people,” Huenger said, “even with new areas open to eat, others are shut down, which slows down the whole flow.” Danny Rubin, a junior living in Tabler Quad, said that Roth Food Court is “always packed because half the food stations are closed.”

Even the commuter students who try to buy a quick meal between classes whenever they are on campus are affected by the decrease in hours. “It’s absolutely absurd how long the lines are,” Erich Mauer, a commuter who is currently a senior and used to live on campus, said.

The Faculty Student Association evaluates and approves all hours of operation, according to Agnello. The decrease in the operating hours of dining locations on campus is turning out to be counter-productive – as more students are finding alternative options for food, by either going off campus or keeping food in their rooms, “I might as well make it myself,” Huenger said.



Stony Brook students waiting patiently (forever) at the SAC Cafeteria for a simple hamburger. (Yes, the line is actually extending back past Portabella’s Pizza Station.)

Multicultural Soup for the SBU Soul

By Derek Mordente

I have some hot diversity-multicultural flavored soup to warm your souls with during these cold, winter months. Before I get into that however, I would like to define the phrase "professor emeritus". According to www.dictionary.com, the word "emeritus" is defined as "retired or honorably discharged from active professional duty, but retaining the title of one's office or position." The garnering of this title in Academia is a prestigious one and one not just bestowed upon anyone. The individual, in our case a professor, must have contributed something rather noteworthy to his or her respective field or have done much for the betterment of his or her university and the students attending it. Basically, it means you did something really good as a professor and it is an honor to hold the title.

Here at Stony Brook, a man by the name of Amiri Baraka (formerly "Leroi Jones"), who is a professor of Africana Studies (and professor of English at Rutgers University), holds this title. What's the big deal? Baraka has been quoted as saying, "Most American white men are trained to be fags. For this reason it is no wonder their faces are weak and blank. ... The average ofay [white person] thinks of the black man as potentially raping every white lady in sight. Which is true, in the sense that the black man should want to rob the white man of everything he has. But for most whites the guilt of the robbery is the guilt of rape. That is, they know in their deepest hearts that they should be robbed, and the white woman understands that only in the rape sequence is she likely to get cleanly, viciously popped."

Nice, right? Amiri Baraka is also a lauded and recognized poet, earning such honors as the Obie award, the American Academy of Arts & Letters award, the James Weldon Johnson Medal for contributions to the arts, Rockefeller Foundation, Guggenheim Foundation, and National Endowment for the Arts grants. He has garnered these awards and

recognitions for "deep," "poetic," and profusely racist musings such as, "Rape the white girls. Rape their fathers. Cut the mothers' throats," anti-semitic prose such as "I got the extermination blues, jewboys. I got the Hitler syndrome figured," and, the cherry on the cake, "Who knew the World Trade Center was gonna get bombed/Who told 4000/Israeli workers at the Twin Towers/To stay home that day/Why did Sharon stay away," from his 2002 poem, "Somebody Blew Up America."

For this, Baraka is considered by many, according to a complimentary report on him done by Michael Tremoglie from Students For Academic Freedom, to be "a profound thinker, poet, polemicist, and scholar." He was once even ap-



pointed poet laureate of New Jersey, but was later removed after an inundation of complaints. Perhaps Academia and Stony

Brook University should follow suit in condemning this bigoted, racist, anti-semitic, and vulgar "poet."

But that won't happen. Why, you ask? Well, the answer is simple. It would go against all the promotion of diversity and all of the politically correct, multicultural decrees set forth by Academia Groupthink. Besides, it's politically correct to bash whites and Jews nowadays anyway. Imagine if I were to take any one of those quotes above and replace the word "white" with "black" or the word "Jewish" with "Islamic." There would be a huge uproar, a raucous, an outrage, a hearing, a lawsuit, and a whole brouhaha. Most importantly however, such outrage would be fully justified. Think about it long and hard as to why none of that ever happened regarding the repulsively hateful comments and "poems" of Stony Brook University Professor Emeritus Amiri Baraka.

The fact that this unapologetic racist, this unabashed anti-Semite, holds such a distinguished and honorable position at the university I attend makes me sick to my stomach. I would hope it makes you sick and disgusted as well. If it does not, or if you really just don't care, then the battle is truly lost. If people like Amiri Baraka continue to be awarded for the "diverse, multicultural" literary excrement mentioned above, it means that in the not so distant future, professors and teachers may be uttering the names of real poets like T.S. Eliot in the same breath as they do drooling hate-obsessed anti-American, anti-Semitic racists like Amiri Baraka and the nauseating doggerel they produce.

So take a stand and fight back. Let all the racists, anti-Semites, and anti-American subversives gallivanting around college campuses across America know that we will not stand for their "vision" of literature or for the world as a whole.

Niches

By Conor Harrigan

Niches. Everyone needs one. They provide a bit of solace, sanity, and a place to “rest,” so to speak, when the world is on your back. In the early spring of 2006, I was a freshman at Stony Brook University. Alone in this collegiate bastion of liberal group think, I found myself becoming quite agitated in my early days at this institution. Then I met the North Country Patriots.

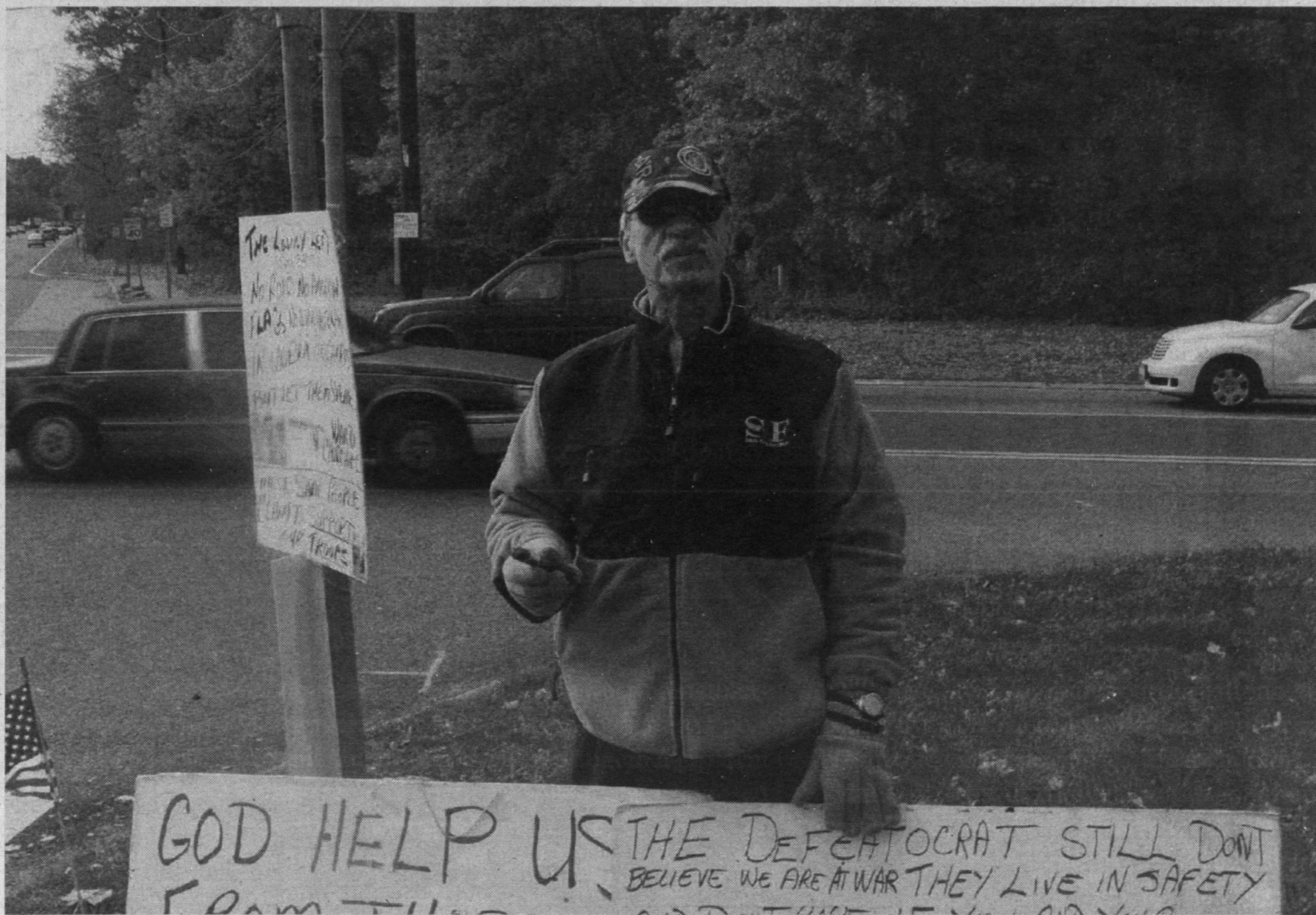
Started in the late fall of 2005, the North Country Patriots got together after watching a bunch of leftist drones set up shop every weekend on the south side of

the corner of North Country Road and 25A, in front of One if Buy Bagel (which by the way, has the best bagels I have ever eaten). An older man named Howie stood watch on the opposite side of the street with a flag and a sign. Soon enough, people from all over the Three Village area and even further came to join Howie. The group began to have a sizeable number, albeit not as large as the communists, socialists, Marxists, and generally moronic leftists across the street. You see, right wingers actually work. The folks on the other side have plenty of time on their

hands. I think you can deduce why.

Anyway, on a temperate Saturday in April, I saw both groups at their respective sides of the street while I was at One if Buy Bagel. Already downtrodden from the rabid liberalism that infected my daily existence, I yearned for a bit of political companionship. I left my girlfriend in the store, walked across the street, and shook all their hands, introducing myself and thanking them for their actions.

That day, I met a lot of great folks, and I’d like to introduce some of them.



This is Howie, the impromptu organizer of our weekly rallies. A Vietnam-era veteran with more than twenty years in the NYPD, Howie is chock full of crazy police stories that’ll make your head spin. With a cigar in hand, Howie is one of our hard asses of the group, always ready and willing to give the

“mooks,” as we call them, across the street a verbal ass-kicking. I also must add that every week Howie has another hysterical sign filled with ridicule and truth for the mooks and passersby to read. He always comes with awesome signs, props, and new electronics to annoy the mooks across the street. Re-

cently, he bought an amplifier with a rechargeable battery and an iPod dock on which we play pro-American songs. On the other hand, Howie does have his softer side, giving a cigar each week to one of the 70’s throwbacks across 25A.

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This is Dominic. A proud WWII, Pacific Theatre veteran, Dominic is the most vigorous 84 year-old I've ever seen. With a booming voice, Dominic is our human loud speaker week in and week out. Seen here, he is yelling through his "Rebels" horn. He originally used a bullhorn, but after the lefties called the cops on us every weekend, he was eventually ordered to stow it.

Dominic spent his time in the Pacific theatre as a gunner on a B-29. He is filled with amazing stories, and a deep love for his comrades in arms, both past and present. When not at our weekly rallies, Dominic spends his time working with the local VFW chapter, selling poppies and raising funds. Immediately prior to our weekly Saturday morning rally, he spends his time at a weekly abortion clinic rally right before ours.

Usually, none of the fools across the road even try yelling him down. All the seasoned protesters on their side know full well that it is already a lost cause to try to out-

shout Dominic. However, there are always one or two newcomers that have at it, but as I say, "Give 'em five minutes." Within five minutes, they give up.

This is John. An army vet, John is one of the quiet members of our group, vigilantly standing in the same spot every week, not bothering to engage the communists and their drivel. He is full of hard-nosed statements such as:

"I'm a red-blooded American motherfucker. I was born that way and I'm gonna die that way."

"I'm a flag-waving motherfucker, and I'll be that way until the day I die."

He is an extremely hard working, family oriented man, with a granddaughter currently serving overseas in Afghanistan in the U.S. Army. I usually spend half of our two-hour gathering with him, talking about the philosophy behind political beliefs. It is good I stay with him, as he keeps me level headed. I must admit, there have been times where the enemy has suckered me into a shout-fest, and it isn't pretty. Thanks to John, my temptations have subsided, and I ignore those across the street almost completely.



On the left is Graham, and on the right is Jim. In the middle is Howie.

Graham is a British national who moved to the U.S. quite a while ago, and is heavily involved in local politics, particularly in education and budgeting. Graham doesn't get to come as often as he used to due to outside responsibilities, but that is fine as long as we get to have him once it a while.

Jim is a special Ed teacher in one of the local schools. A mild-mannered man, Jim, along with John help keep me in line. In his spare time, Jim volunteers for local Republican campaigns during election years. This past election cycle, Jim did a lot of work for the Lee Zeldin campaign. He is one of our loyal attendees and usually makes it every Saturday morning.



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This is Roger, one of our newcomers, who is now a loyal weekly attendee. He began coming just about a year ago, and is now an enthusiastic member who is always bringing creative signs and flags. Roger is a Navy veteran, a "Tin Can Sailor" as he likes to be called. Roger also provides us with one of our biggest, honorable, and touching props.



Roger's brother's flag.

Roger's brother was also in the Navy. His brother unfortunately passed away within the last two years. It is a large, beautiful flag that we wave weekly. I have the honor to help Roger stow the huge flag

every time I am there.

I have had some of the best moments of my life with the North Country Patriots. They are like my second family. The elders of the group are like the grandfathers I've never had. I know one day we will pack it up, saying goodbye to the weekly rally. Though the thought brings a tear to

my eyes, I will take comfort in knowing we did the right thing, and said the things too many don't, supporting those that too many forget.

Niches. Everyone needs one, but on a temperate Saturday in April, I found mine.

Boycott Israel!

By Sarah Marshall

WARNING: This is not a Pro-Israel article telling you why Israel was right this time (and just about every other time). If you don't already know that then you should stop watching CNN and open your eyes.

Don't you love all the ridiculous anti-Israel Facebook groups that sprung up over Winter Break? As Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, anti-Zionism is the same thing as anti-Semitism. But let's forget about that and assume that everyone who is anti-Zionism is actually really supportive of Judaism and Jews in general. That would make sense. Over Winter Break I sang the National Anthem and songs for peace outside the Israeli Embassy in NYC. The next morning I saw the front pages covered in painted signs from around the world reading things like "Death to all Juice," but I guess that's irrelevant. Let's go back to our original assumption that anti-Zionists actually want nothing but peace.

My favorite Facebook group of winter break was "stop buying Israeli products as a protest for gaza". The reason that I loved this group is we had some really progressive dialogue, and I feel we are moving towards peace in the Middle East. There are dozens of these groups, having as many as 15,000 members each (all started in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, or France...surprise, surprise). For the record, I obviously disagree with these people, but a boycott is a logical way to show your disagreement with a country's actions. The only issue this group has is that they also want to boycott "jewish powerful products." They just didn't realize how difficult this would

be. This group has over 1,000 members, all morons. Their list ranges from things like Banana Republic, Wal Mart, and Bath and Body Works, to Coca Cola, McDonald's, Kit-Kat, and Disney. It has hundreds of items and someone would have to basically live naked in a cave to support this boycott. Israel is obviously a powerful country, but they are adding all 14 million of the world's Jews to the boycott, assuming that all of these Jews are responsible for what is happening in Gaza.

Macs, they should destroy their computer. This is the response we got: "Does the Religion is greater then Humanity?whts the fault these child?" I still don't know how they really feel about destroying their computers.

I reminded everyone that if we are boycotting "powerful Jewish products" we should remember the products that have been around for a while that were developed by Jews. This includes a lot of

somewhat trivial things like blue jeans, but what about the pacemaker? I suggested all people with grandparents using the pacemaker to sneakily somehow offset them. Why let their innocent grandparents support genocide, after all? Don't forget the polio vaccine. I suggested finding a way to undo it. I know I'd rather die for truth than support an apartheid state! I was really excited about this boycott until I realized nobody was as excited as I was. The first response to my list came four days later, when a fellow named Mujahidur responded, "sarah marshal is a waste gash." Don't these people care about anything?! Maybe not the boycott, but at least spelling!

I was kicked out of the group. I realized quickly that nobody in any of these groups has a real sense of logic (if nothing else from the fact that they are boycotting Jewish people while on a site made by Jews). They are wasting their time (gash!). I, for one, know that next time my sinuses bother me, I'll avoid Kleenex brand, as the group considers it to be a "jewish powerful product!" Do it for peace!

For fun, my Israeli friend and I joined the group, pretending very gung-ho about the boycott. I'd venture to say we were the most enthusiastic boycotters.

The first issue I brought up was the fact that Facebook was created by two Jews: Mark Zuckerberg and Dustin Moskovitz. I suggested we use a different medium to promote our boycott, but that just made group founders, Ameer and Saed, really angry. My friend brought up the fact that Windows and Linux were partially developed by Israel, so unless the members had



Reading Between the Superpowers

By John Galt

Growing up as a kid in the late eighties and nineties, I absolutely loved the adventures and exploits of comic book superheroes, as I'm sure kids did in the seventies, sixties, and all the way back to the twenties and thirties. Armed with a Superman action figure in one hand and a Batman action figure in the other, I used to act out all of each superhero's amazing endeavors, even if those endeavors happened to be on my kitchen floor. Today however, I find I can get something different out of comic books than the childish enjoyment I experienced as a kid. I know it sounds ridiculous, but many comic book superheroes' powers can be applied to every day, real life matters, especially as a college student during an ongoing war against terrorism and in the wake of an historic presidential election.

First, let's take a look at a man named Steve Rogers. Steve Rogers is a patriot, one who proudly voiced his opinion as he spoke out against threats to liberty and freedom both before and after WWII. He acted on these opinions, and enlisted to fight against terrible threats to our nation such as fascism and communism. Most importantly, he took the time to understand his world, his values, and his enemies. As he has continued to fight all sorts of evil for over 60 years, it is obvious that Steve Rogers is no ordinary man but the extraordinary superhero known as Captain America. While you may be saying that it is impossible to be a superhero, you are, in terms of super powers, unfortunately right. However, that does not mean that you cannot emulate and abide by the virtuous, dutiful, and ideal characteristics they exhibit. Today our brave men and women fight the menace of terrorism in places such as Afghanistan and Iraq. These men and women embody the characteristics of Captain America. However, exhibiting the characteristics of a superhero is not limited to those displayed on the battlefield. Knowing your world, understanding it from different perspectives, and becoming well rounded with regards to your times is just as important. Now, Captain America probably knows who won American Idol and the latest marquee player that the Yankees have signed, however, it is important not

to become so involved with yourself and your own interests and pursuits that you forget everything else, such as the name of the Vice President, the country you are at war with, and why the date December 7th is recognized as a date that will live in infamy.

Not bothering to familiarize ourselves with such information is a very real injustice we are all capable of at any time in our lives. Captain America shows us that it is vital to have opinions about the great issues and debates of our times and not simply reply with an apathetic "I don't know" when asked for an opinion. The only thing that could be worse is an "I don't care."

We are all blessed, and lucky, to have the rights and freedoms we enjoy handed to us on a silver platter. It was by no small feat that these were achieved, and it would be a travesty if we did not utilize them to make the world just a little bit better than the way it was handed to us. The one superhero trait we all possess, and are all capable of, is that of being well informed. Bruce Wayne, for example, is an extraordinarily well rounded and well informed man, one who is politically involved in moral and governmental debates, well aware of foreign affairs, familiar with leaders and their positions and one who takes the time to read the newspaper every day. Bruce Wayne, also known as Batman, has no e x -

t r a o r -
ordinary super
powers. He relies on
his wit, his intelligence,
and his understanding of his
world to get the better of his ene-

mies. We can learn from Bruce Wayne's example.

Another illustration of this can be shown through Peter Parker. Peter Parker lives amongst common people, has a common job, and goes through all of life's common issues. However, Peter Parker himself is not common; he is a superhero, one whom many may know as Spiderman. One of his superpowers is a 6th sense, not to see dead people, but one that allows him to see danger shortly prior to its actual occurrence, a power that saves his life numerous times. While none of us can literally see the future, we can however experience this sort of "spidey-sense." Take for example, the recent presidential election. Some voted strictly based on party orientation and some may have even voted strictly on who was more handsome. Neither of these methods utilizes the "spidey-sense." Someone who takes the time to research the candidates, takes the time to understand his or her beliefs, his or her views about contemporary social issues, and his or her general character can have that "spidey-sense" to guide them before

casting a vote for someone who will lead us. Knowing who your leaders are, and what they stand for, is quite possibly the biggest thing one can do to protect freedom.

In fact, such knowledge is crucial to the survival of the freedom so many have fought and given the ultimate sacrifice for. Remember, as Greek thinker Pericles said, "Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!" So the next time you see a comic book, pick it up and see what else you might be able to get from it hidden beneath the surface.



Ask The Patriot

By Dan Rubin

How many times have you sat in class with drool running off of your bottom lip, pondering the usefulness of yet another dull lecture? I have more than just a hunch that the average Joe will never need to know the Krebs cycle or the DNA sequence of a fruit fly. The only time you may need to recall this plethora of knowledge will be when you accidentally leave a light on in your car overnight and kill your battery. Oh wait. Your professor didn't go over that. I bet you wish they did as you stand there in the cold, pouring rain, late for your dinner date with that cute girl from your math class. Here's where we come in. This is how to properly jumpstart a dead car battery.

Step 1) Line up the two cars, with their batteries as close as possible (Without allowing the cars to touch). Ensure that one car actually has a working battery and that BOTH CARS ARE OFF.

Step 2) Turn off everything in both cars (Headlights, Blinkers, Radios, A/C's, etc.). Also unplug everything from the cigarette lighters of both cars (Phone chargers, Navigation systems, etc.).

Step 3) Take the jumper cable that your dad makes you keep in your trunk (You know, the one you will never have to use because you are not nearly dumb enough to leave that light on in your car).

Step 4) Connect the ends of the jump-

er cables to the batteries of the cars in the following sequence. Trust us, this is the right way, don't experiment.

4a) Connect the end of the Positive (+) cable to the Positive (+) terminal on the DEAD car battery. (The Positive (+) cable is usually red, but check your individual cable to make sure.)

4b) Connect the other end of the Positive (+) cable to the Positive (+) terminal on the good car battery.

4c) Connect the Negative (-) cable to the Negative (-) terminal on the good car battery. (The Negative (-) cable is usually black, but check your individual cable to make sure.)

4d) Connect the other end of the Negative (-) cable to a non-painted metal part of the engine of the dead car. Placing this cable on the battery itself dramatically increases the chances that you will obliterate yourself in a fiery explosion of battery acid and pain.

Step 5) Double check that all connections are made exactly as instructed above. We know you're too smart to mess up these simple instructions. With your fine attention to detail you managed to neglect the simple task of turning your lights off and let your battery die. So excuse us for being skeptical of your handiwork, and go check.

Step 6) Start the engine on the good car and let it run for a minute or two to send some juice to the dead battery.

Step 7) Try to start the engine on the dead car. If it starts let it run to recharge the battery.

Step 8) Remove the cables in reverse order you put them on, being careful not to touch the ends of the cables to each other.

1st) Remove Negative (-) cable from formerly dead battery

2nd) Remove Negative (-) cable from good battery

3rd) Remove Positive (+) cable from good battery

4th) Remove Positive (+) cable from formerly dead battery

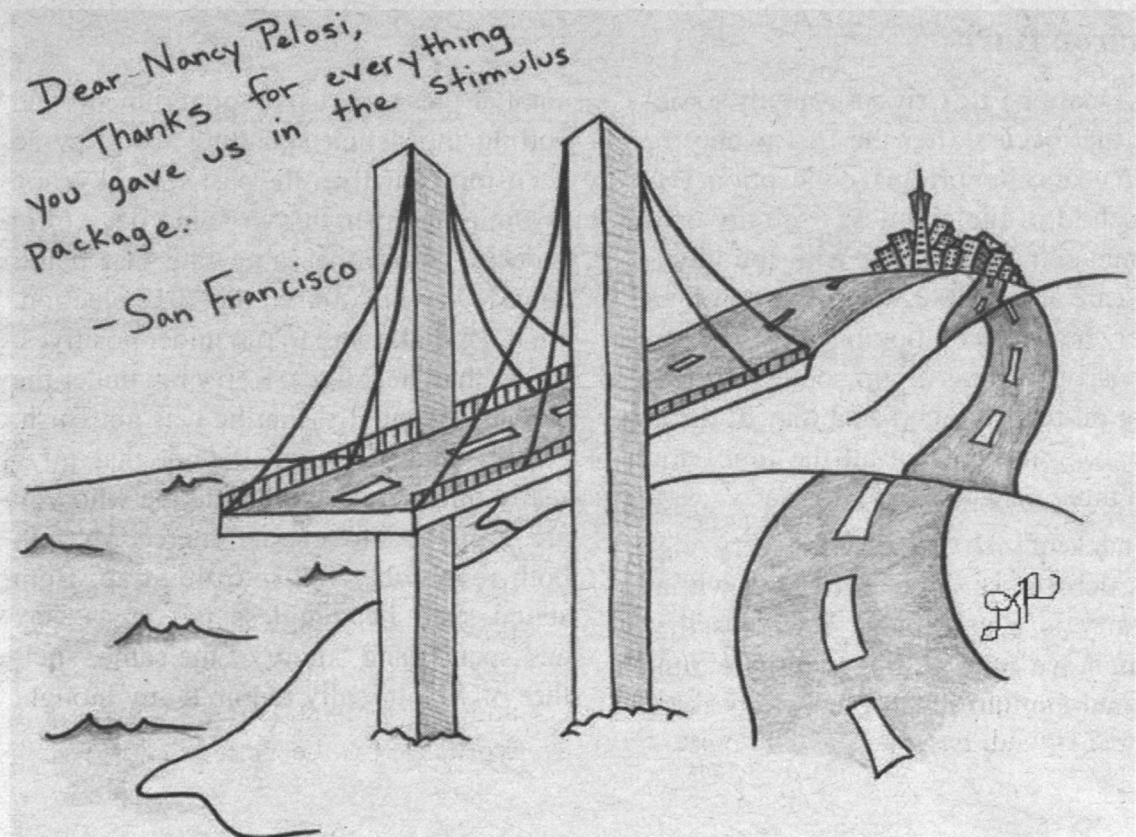
If that didn't work... well, we hope you are an AAA member or have the number to a good taxi service. Feel free to cut these instructions out and leave them with your jumper cables.

If you have anything you would like to learn about, send us an e-mail at sbpatriot@gmail.com.

The Fine Print: These instructions are to be used at your own risk. We think they are fool proof, but hey you never know. Basically what it boils down to is... If you blow yourself up, it's not our fault.

Cartoon of the Month

By Dan Rubin



The American Dream

By Britany Klenofsky

My grandfather was a Holocaust survivor. Stripped of his identity, Nazi Germany simply identified him as KL 84745, a number that was brutally etched into his arm for him to always remember. In a world where only a single thought existed and ruled, he barely survived. However, on the verge of dying from typhus, he was liberated by countries that believed in human life, countries that believed in thought, and most importantly people who fought for individuality and dreams. Parentless and lost in a world he did not remember, he walked around Europe and eventually landed in America.

On Ellis Island, he became a man. On Ellis Island, he became an individual—Harry Katz. My grandfather was granted the ability to start a life. Working during the day and taking classes at night, he struggled to succeed. He tried and sometimes he failed, but that is the amazing thing about the new country that he wanted to desperately assimilate into. That is the gift of a free-market society, of capitalism. He was finally given a CHANCE.

When my grandparents were pregnant with my mother, he began to cry. Ever the strong man, sometimes too strong, he would not permit weakness or tears ever; he began to weep at the realization that

he, a Holocaust survivor who had nothing, suddenly had more than just something. He cried at the realization that he was able to lie in his own warm bed, with his beautiful, pregnant wife, while his son slept in the next room of the home he was just able to buy. He is the reason why we should all hug so tight to the American dream.

It is in this country that you can see hard times and it is in this country that you can work hard to succeed. One can not live off of material things, but one can certainly live off of the taste of success that was achieved through one's own personal endeavors. While in a rough patch, people want to suddenly change things. Let the government take over because health care is not perfect. I could not disagree more. My grandfather had private health insurance, but in the end Medicare took over. A man who worked hard was suddenly limited in end of life care, which was not granted the same rights as Medicaid. Not to say that poor people do not deserve proper care, but is it not a problem that a man who worked hard and provided for the system could not reap what he sowed? It seems pointless that he worked hard. There was no advocate for him if not for my family. So what is to say

that government health insurance would not have brought him even closer to his identity-less persona? This country is big and how could it provide for everyone without stripping you of your identity?

My grandfather always made me grateful for this country that we live in. There was a reason why he made sure that only English was spoken in his house, and that was because he was proud of the country that he was allowed to LIVE in. There are things that we take for granted. While sitting in the hospital my father told me about a Palestinian protest in Florida. "Go back to the oven." Outraged of course, my father simply said, "I guess that is freedom of speech for you." It is amazing that people can damn and criticize America, which protects their right to damn and criticize it, while rallying in support of a country that would strip and abuse their right to do so. After 9-11, my poppy said that it reminded him of when the Nazis raided his town. We must always remember that. We must always remember that at any moment someone could take away your rights and we must remember that there is a reason why this country is so great: because we are granted the chance to speak, the chance to try, and the chance to live.

Quarter Life Crisis (Part I)

By Aaron Burr

A Quarter-Life Crisis is roughly something that occurs after the first twenty or so odd years after original conception. Being a child of the eighties, I see my own personal self falter along with the ideology I care about. 2008 set the scene for an entirely new way of looking at the Republican party, turning it into something less reliant on fear (which I feel may at times be appropriate, but not all the time) and based more on logic and fact.

Thankfully, I feel that the very vigorous debate going on right now within the party is a great sign. It shows that although we may differ, we share fundamental similarities in our beliefs for a

smaller, less intrusive government and cutting the deficit spending we grew so accustomed to over the past several years. We must temper this to some degree, in order to avoid the same fate that befell John Kerry in 2004. In the 2012 election, we must make sure to run under positives, rather than negatives. Kerry ran under the slogan, essentially, that he was not Bush. Simply making yourself "not that guy" really doesn't effectively define who you are. Palin and, to a lesser degree, McCain both regrettably fell into this trap. Both stated such meaningless jargon as "tax and spend" and "more of the same," neither of which really required any thought

on a deeper level.

Indeed, the 2008 campaign may be looked back at as too many buzz words (on both sides) and woefully little substance. Of course it is my hope that the current President actually succeeds, and although I don't agree with him in theory, I hope he is able to reign in some of his less logical ideas. Getting rid of Paulson would be a nice change as well.

Unfortunately, everyone seems so enamored with President Obama, the rest of the world has become something of a blur, when it should be the other way around. Yes, this was a historic election. However, the financial meltdown will be what really

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affects everyone far more than whoever is President. And whatever happens under Obama's watch, no one can possibly reach the expectations that have been set for him. Plus, some of his economic plans seem to give the government even more power over the economy than it already has (and probably exercising just as poorly as it currently does, with botched wastes of money on financial markets and auto makers). The crisis did increase in severity just as Bush entered the "Lame Duck" phase of his Presidency, thus neutering him from doing anything (whether good or bad) about it.

Seeing myself in all this, I get to hang out with college educated people applying to jobs at Game Stop, and being rejected. I hear of my friends, some of whom, a bit older than me, worked at these financial firms. One particularly awful case involves a 25 year old who graduated at age 22, only to have worked full-time for nine months out of the past three years. A certain sense of helplessness and dread comes about when thinking about such things.

Nicholas Sarkozy stated that capitalism is dead, but I would not venture out anywhere this far. Unfortunately those in Congress seem to believe that running large deficit spending would be the most effective way out of this mire. If they continue down this path, we may not be able to better restructure our economy, but instead fall into the same bubble-bust cycle we create for ourselves. Instead, the bad loans should be traded freely, so their true intrinsic value can be known. By keeping everything under wraps, and allowing this information out only in drips and drabs, we avoid true knowledge of the failure

of these credit markets (and particularly derivatives). \$700 billion could possibly take care of this problem. The derivatives market is several times the size of global economic output, some ungodly number that can't be processed, so 700 billion in that market is really much too little. And by allowing banks this money, all they seem to do is wrap it around themselves, like a child wrapped in a blanket on a cold day, rather than unfreezing the credit mar-



kets themselves. The credit markets take time to recover, so giving them large sums of money at their disposal won't make the process move any faster or easier.

Seeing this sort of waste of money is truly tragic for me, for I know the people making these decisions will ultimately be dead and gone before I'm around to pay it. Parts of the package outrage me that we can just create a giant Ponzi scheme and expect later generations to pay for the foolishness of the generations current and

past. Bernie Madoff looks harmless when compared to the sort of fraud committed by Social Security, a completely unsustainable program in its current form. It is harmful to current and future productivity, that we feel the need to spend our way out of any trouble and harm. Rather, what happened to being frugal? Since a good 66% of our economy is made up by consumer spending, it looks as though those who save are being heavily penalized for doing so.

I understand this last issue may go outside of the scope of liberal versus conservative, and requires something of a sea change in thought. Perhaps it will be my generation that decides against such wasteful spending and stupid economic policies of throwing money at problems. The better idea is allowing markets to solve their own problems, and seeing what the true value of these loans (good and bad) would truly be. Most of these loans were made with the help of the government, in trying to create loans for lower income individuals, who often could not afford these homes. Banks took advantage of the more than generous governmental support and gave these loans out with gusto. Had the government not gotten involved, banks and people might have been wearier about making and taking such loans. Yes, it may seem like a silly idea, especially when so many rally against the markets for their supposed greed, but in the long run we'll have an economy that won't be dictated by Washington, but for the people and by the people.

A Modest Proposal

BASED ON JONATHAN SWIFT'S ESSAY OF THE SATIRICAL NATURE.

By Deborah Machalow

The freedom of expression, the ability to express oneself freely is not an important asset to the American people.

After September 11, 2001, the United States enacted the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act, also known as the U.S.A.

Patriot Act. This bill was passed to help combat terrorism and prevent another horrific attack like the one in Manhattan on the Twin Towers. The Bush Administration had the right idea, but failed to take it far enough to adequately "provide for the common defense."

The U.S.A. Patriot Act gives the

government the ability to read: emails, letters, financial statements, credit card and bank statements, confiscate computer hard drives, wire tap phones, keep record of what books are taken out of the library, (without a warrant) and detain, without the reading of the Miranda Rights, a suspected terrorist. With our nation's safety at stake,

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these measures aren't enough.

Firstly, suspected terrorists should be more closely monitored. It is not enough to read emails, and listen in on phone conversations, sedition against the government and the country must be stopped on all levels. Thoughts criticizing this nation may lead to terrorist plots and thus must be stopped.

Therefore, I strongly suggest that a clinic should be opened that specializes in thoughts and the reading of minds. This clinic's main job would be implanting computer chips into suspected terrorists' brains and reading the log of thoughts. This implanted chip would keep a record of the person's thoughts. Any imagined or thoughts of sedition would result in the person's immediate incarceration.

This clinic would be beneficial to society in other ways than just stopping terrorist plots before they can happen. Opening of this clinic would increase the number of government jobs, and thus boost the economy. The clinic would employ neurosurgeons, computer technicians, and government officials. These three groups of people would be responsible for the implantation, the design and the reading of the computer chips, respectively.

A second recommendation of mine

would be to expand the original U.S.A. Patriot Act's power, so that it would not be only for potential terrorists. The government should be able to monitor each and every citizen that way. The government then would be able to hear/read people's opinions that were negative towards the government and they could then be arrested for sedition against the government. America would be a much safer place if terrorism was stopped before a plan was hatched.

An argument might be that this is disregarding the Constitution entirely. That is the case – however, the Founding Fathers were not serious when they composed the Bill

Of Rights. How could they be? There is even a clause in the Constitution that allows for the increased power of the government. The so called "Elastic Clause", Article 1,

Section 18, Clause 2: Necessary and Proper Clause, reads: "Congress reserves the right to pass any law which is necessary and proper to maintain the foregoing powers." This means that in order to keep the current government in power, the government can exercise powers it otherwise wouldn't. The founders of our nation even saw that the government must be the one to control the people, and not the

other way around.

Further proof that the Founding Fathers believed that Congress wasn't serious about the Bill of Rights is that one of the men involved in the writing of the Constitution passed the Sedition Act in 1798. John Adams' act was to stop seditious attacks from weakening the government and its power. It made it illegal to criticize the country's government.

John Adams wasn't the only president to pass such a law; Woodrow Wilson, passed the Sedition Act of 1918. This newer version of the Sedition Act forbade U.S. citizens from using "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" when discussing the government and government policies. This was a limitation on the First Amendment rights, which obviously the Founding Fathers didn't want to guarantee the people.

The U.S.A. Patriot Act was enacted to try to stop terrorism. That's all this act will manage to do, unless it gets stricter. When dealing with our nation's safety, and the safety of its people, there is no such thing as being too strict. The United States government is to protect the people, and that is a job it is taking far too lightly.

Reparations

By Sarah Marshall

While surfing YouTube I found a clip of a woman standing on the streets of New York City asking random white people if they would like to pay reparations. She said that they owed her, and this was their chance to make up for what their ancestors did to hers. Most of the white people just laughed at her and walked away, but a few actually gave her money. Apparently, they felt guilty for the crime they had committed and giving the money to artist Damali Ayo somehow made up for everything. After collecting way more money than your typical panhandler, Ayo went up to unsuspecting random black people and gave them the money. "You earned this!" she insisted. Most of them shrugged, took the money, and then walked away, but a few protested. Obviously what Ayo

did is an extreme example, but it got me thinking. Is there a possibility that I owe my best friend from third grade (she was black) money?

The vast majority of Americans, especially New Yorkers, are descendants of people that moved to America sometime in the 20th century. Obviously these people would get an exemption on their reparation payment. The same way President Clinton got a tax credit because he donated underwear to charity, third generation Americans would get a sort of "I'm Not a Descendant of a Slave Owner!" credit. Let's figure out just how many reparation-payers we are talking about. In the former Confederate States of America, only about 25% of people owned a single slave in the year 1860, and less than 0.7%

owned a large plantation. Scarlet O'Hara was not normal. Also remember that the majority of the American population was living in the Union, so in reality about 10% of Americans owned slaves, most of them being more of a live-in nanny/maid rather than a cotton picker living in a shed out back, but let's ignore that. So about how many of us are going to trace ourselves back to that 10%? I'll spare you the math. The highest estimates for how many Americans who can be traced back to slave owners are at around one million (and many of those are people that consider themselves black). That's less than half of one percent of white Americans. So maybe reparations aren't a bad idea, but it was a bad idea for Ayo to ask random whites (especially in New York) for

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reparations.

When I got the idea for this article, I thought it would be only fair to do a little family research. Seven of my eight great-grandparents were immigrants. What about the eighth great-grandparent? I am the descendant of a slave owner, and a particularly brutal one at that. His name was Roswell King, Jr. (my grandmother's maiden name is King). Martin Luther King, Jr.'s grandfather, James Albert, was born a slave outside of Atlanta, and when he was freed he took the last name of the plantation. Yep, that's right, you can put two and two together. So under the plan I'm going to propose, I definitely owe some sort of reparations, and I should probably be on CNN handing one of those fake big checks to Yolanda King, MLK Jr.'s granddaughter who is less than a year old. She deserves it, after all.

How many Americans are the descendants of slaves? It's hard to find data on this, but most estimates say that around 25 million of the almost 40 million Black Americans are descendants of slaves. Most of them live in the South and not in New York City (Ayo apparently doesn't really enjoy research).

So now we have our numbers. Let's find out exactly how to go about doing

this, and to do it we'll do what all great countries do in times of uncertainty: look at the other countries guilty of this Original Sin and see how they have distributed their reparations. While about half a million slaves were brought to Canada and the United States, about 3.6 million were brought to Brazil. Unfortunately Brazil hasn't paid reparations yet (hopefully they will follow our example now that President Obama is going to save the world and make every country love America again). About a million slaves were brought to Cuba alone, but the great



communist nation has yet to pay reparations. The Islamic countries of Northeastern Africa and Southwest Asia transported around 15 million Sub-Saharan Africans north to slavery, yet none of them have paid reparations. In fact, the slave trade is as common as ever in Mauritania, and Saudi Arabia had a LEGAL slave trade as recently as the 1960s. It appears our evil nation is going to be the first to repent.

Now for the final issue we have: How do we design these reparations? Why break tradition? Let's add more taxes! Of course, those with an exemption won't have to pay--they'll just have to fill out a few forms (and figure out which), present a family tree going back to at least the year 1750, get all of this approved by the government, fill out a few more forms, make some phone calls, and voilà! Exemption. Everyone that doesn't qualify (due to an evil lineage like myself or the inability to prove one's heritage, like my dad's side who changed their last name a few times), don't worry. You can either pay a tax, or send your donations directly to Damali Ayo. She'll know how to redistribute it!

The New Funny

By Aaron Burr

Seeing some of the newest comedians starting to gain attention, I wonder if perhaps this group is getting together to form a new movement in comedy. As opposed to the shouting, confrontational nature of Carlos Mencia and Dane Cook, I'm glad to see that something more intelligent, more (dare I say) compassionate towards our fellow man. My original title could have been "The New Funny (or how Dane Cook can go stuff himself)," but I shall keep it focused on the new positive comedians I see. Besides, the old comedians usually were the ones who made jokes at the expense of others. These new comedians consist of people like Demetri Martin, Tim and Eric, the show "Flight of the Conchords," and Napoleon Dynamite, among many others.

Basically, previous incarnations of comedy consisted of making a joke at someone else's expense. Mean humor, if you will. You'd say what was wrong, and offer suggestions on how to fix it. Usually there would be some vague social awareness involved in this, which would include the comedian's own brand of politics. I'm not saying that this style will ever leave, but there does appear to be something else happening. What is so different about this new attention is that it is more observational, less harsh and bile-filled. For my purposes, I'll call it "The New Funny" since no one (to my knowledge) has bothered writing about this new form of comedy which I adore. And lately it seems to have gained steam.

Saying that this began quite recently would be untrue. People such as Mitch Hedberg had been doing it for a while. Basically, he would have strangely insightful sayings with a complete deadpan face, such as dropping candy bars to get maximum flavor. Jack Handy worked on similar ideas, like such gems as: "The crows seemed to be calling his name, thought Caw." However, this hadn't really warranted anything close to a full time show or movie with that sort of humor. Wes Anderson created an atmosphere of comedy that got filled with endless quirk and deadpan, observational humor. Even the background of his movies served the plot in the forefront (he'd match them, or have insane pictures behind them as the characters themselves remained serious). Rushmore, which sort of started a

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bigger focus on well-off but flawed characters, started the exploration of how to laugh at bizarre situations and almost unreal dialogue. Max Fisher created probably half of the lines I wish I had enough confidence to use in real life. Of course, I would never perch myself in a tower to shoot at someone's ear with an air gun, but to each their own. Although comedy isn't exclusively Wes Anderson's focus, he uses it to show us how to deal with unpleasant realities without harming others' feelings. Sensitivity treatment made for our amusement, and this idea has been going through permutations since Rushmore in 1997.

A few similarities exist between these many different comedians. Political humor seems to exist, so far as it almost short-circuits political agitation. We can sort of expect this reaction to so much politicking, on both right and left wings. Basically, being raised on various ideologies shouting at us from so many television shows, advertisements, and music itself, one could reasonably expect the current generation to be indifferent to so much in politics. "Flight of the Conchords" exposes some of this absurdity, in a particularly fine verse in their song "Think About It": "They're turning kids into slaves to make cheaper sneakers/ But what's the real cost?/ 'Cause the sneakers don't seem that much cheaper/ Why are we still paying so much for sneakers/ When you got them made by little slave kids/ What are your overheads?" Instead of taking a protest song format, or trying to raise social awareness, they are upset about expensive shoes. Basically Bret and Jermaine show that there can be humor found in their poverty and utter inability to improve.

Despite how funny these comedians are, what really made it possible for them had to be "Napoleon Dynamite" and its true embrace of the nerd. There is a reason that the Sundance film festival adored this movie. Within a seemingly normal "nerd versus the cool kids" sort of movie, we see something much more interesting when we pay attention. Napoleon is inept at basically everything, being unable to move or walk like a normal person. Everything for him is awkward, even interaction with people who are his friends. Eventually Napoleon shows glimmers of hope towards the end of the movie, but key elements of this movie, like the awkwardness displayed by all, have become hallmarks of The New Funny.

Demetri Martin embodies awkward. A stick figure of a person, he carries around a guitar and board, where various little sketches summarize his points. Again, he uses common office materials for comedic effect, describing non-work activities with a work-like efficiency. He heavily employs surreal musings about everyday occurrences, people who like cats, how successful he is with the ladies, etc. Irony becomes his best friend, and his deadpan delivery is perhaps what brings the whole act together.

Irony intertwines all of these comedians. While some feel that irony has become perhaps too large a part of my generation's humor, keep in mind all the insipid forms of entertainment that exist. From so much mediocre media, it becomes almost irresistible to mock its self-importance. Jon Stewart and Steven Colbert did this successfully, one of the reasons why Fox News' attempt at this failed, was its own status. A major news station is far too up in its own hype to realize how to genuinely mock others, since right and left wing media outlets essentially suffer the same endemic problems (too much hubris, over the top graphics, way too loud music, etc). Had this right-wing attempt at The Daily Show been done by some random outsider, say a bored history student, the results would have been much funnier. That student would've known that humor stems from mocking the general situation, not just sticking with purely politically incorrect material, most of which had forced delivery anyway. By focusing instead on how left-wing media can easily turn into a giant mirror, reflecting upon its own good looks. Unfortunately for the news, they still seem to miss the biggest joke of Stewart and Colbert that they deliver more substance, with more laughs and thought behind it. Since the news media seems condemned to such unnatural, cruel treatment of the vast majority of its stories, many younger viewers have been completely turned off. Natural reactions to such poor media options would result in large groups of disillusioned twenty-some things looking for any creative way to mock the greater (and older) establishment. If anything, this new form of humor has great improvements over so much ranting and raving against this and that that had previously been so popular. We're not quite as cruel towards one another as previous generations, and we realize that we are all in this together right now.

Being in a room with so many equally disillusioned youths can be awkward. Awkward is the focus of the New Funny. Every awkward situation is played and replayed back in our heads, from moments as a child. Why not help people cope with these inevitable situations, by trying to find the humor in it. After all, a lot of this is supposed to be more sensitive and kind. If we know how to diffuse awkward situations, or at least find joy in them, perhaps we can learn how to better appreciate one another's company. Or we could become socially inept at the exact same time.

There is the question of "Why now?" After all the political, racial, and cruel parts of humor had run themselves dry, maybe this is the last place for us to go. Part of it may also have to do with the severe economic recession and unemployment we're facing. Or it may have to do with the vast number of college graduates from various liberal arts backgrounds (thus ideal fodder for the sort of jokes these guys make). Also, there is a certain political aspect to all this. Political humor ran very, very dry these past few years, as we were told the same jokes over and over again. Finally the election brought some humor, but even that lasted two whole years. The New Funny, on the other hand, has the benefit of being focused on irony, technology, and situations. Material such as this has a much longer shelf life than say, some guy ranting endlessly about our broken borders while surrounded by a metal fence. I remember seeing that thing on Mencia, and after hearing the lame jokes that surrounded such an elaborate setup, I thought "Why?"

Part of the reason these new comedians can be so likable has to do with how they throw away the setup. At the very most, there are perhaps some slides to shows, various props, but nothing of grandeur. Even the comedians involved in this movement seem taken aback. Seeing them after the routines, they don't understand how they got so many fans, and are almost embarrassed by it. Modesty and humility actually play a key role in the delivery of these deadpan jokes. Watching Tim and Eric walk by in Manhattan, after a show, Tim looked completely confused as to why people would wait in the cold for them. The reason people did is because this New Funny is so warm and caring about that which it mocks. And we know it and love it.

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Thank God I Don't Live There!

Happy with the way things are going in the United States? According to a recent Gallup poll, 83% of Americans would answer that question with a resounding no. For those of you in this somber majority, The Patriot invites you to join us each month in exploring some countries which may just reinvigorate your faith in the good 'ol red, white and blue.

Thank God I don't live in Zimbabwe! Having a tough time during the current struggling economy? Feel like the government is letting you down? Let me introduce to you a country brave enough to suggest an answer, hyperinflation. To be exact, 9,000% inflation. In 2001, President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, enacted the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act calling for the printing of hundreds of trillions of Zimbabwean dollars of almost no value. Compete with that Oprah! Shortly thereafter, Zimbabwe's economy crashed and food and oil shortages followed. No oil? Talk about "going green!" Obesity? No food, no problem.

If that didn't make you want to hop on the next flight, the life expectancy of the average male Zimbabwean is now 37 years of age. The average life expectancy of females is even lower

at 34 years of age. Who wants to be old and wrinkly anyway? Further, if you thought HIV and AIDS were a problem in America, consider them in Zimbabwe. In 1997, 25% of the population was infected with either HIV or AIDS. Sounds kind of like the characters in Rent... They seemed happy, they were singing weren't they?

The Zimbabwe government under Mugabe has even made government policy simple and easy to understand by removing the 'rights to shelter, food, and assembly' section. Who knows what all that government jargon means anyway?

So the next time you visit your real estate agent, ask him if you can see the brochure for Zimbabwe. It's the perfect place to retire after college and spend the remaining fourteen years of your life.



Pleasant Pumping

Gas prices are down. So why are you?

By Alexander Chamesian

If you've been to the gas station recently you will have noticed that gas is much cheaper than it used to be. During the summer regular gasoline was selling at an onerous \$4 per gallon. Right now a gallon of regular gas can be got at about \$2 per gallon. Given all the hand wringing and complaining we did just a few months ago when filling up meant spending at least \$60 a shot, you'd think the halving of gas prices would be met with great fanfare and appreciation in the news and in daily conversation. Not so. There's been little mention of this remarkable decrease by any of the major news outlets. When prices were high, it's all the media and politicians could talk about, but now, not a peep. So what gives?

It's a matter of causes. The media, the left's fawning and loyal battalion, thrives on peddling a narrative in which greedy, oppressive, exploitive businesses trample on us peons to satisfy their avarice. It's the same tired 'robber baron' story you learned about in American History class. According to this view, high gas prices arise when greedy oil executives make 'obscene profits' - which people like Hilary Clinton try to cap and impose windfall taxes on. In this worldview, prices don't reflect the underlying status of supply and demand for a commodity but rather are the arbitrary playthings of the business elite. And, through this lens, the only 'solution' is government intervention by selfless, benevolent politicians and truth-seeking journalists.

Back in the real world, there isn't some slimy suit sitting in his conference room manipulating gas prices while watching his secret Swiss bank account grow. Rather, gas prices are the product of decentralized market forces, the laws of supply and demand. In the case of the US, which consumes about 25% of the world's total petroleum annually, the price we pay at the pump is reflective of how much gas there is to go around and how much we want to drive

our cars, heat our homes, and power the engine of industry. We used to get gas for cheap because there was less demand than there is now with China and India, two emerging economic powerhouses, asking for their sizable piece of the pie. With more people trying to get their hands on a finite and diminishing resource, it is unavoidable that we will pay more than we used to if we want to live, work and play the way we do. Once again we confront the reality that "There is no such thing as a free lunch."

But what about government? The Left is correct to say that government can affect the price of gas. What they neglect to mention is that government tampering through taxation or price setting either causes shortages, high prices for consumers or both. The reason for this is that demand for gas is inelastic. This is to say that demand for gas changes little with a change in price. Like food and clothing, gas is so important to us that we are willing to pay more than we'd like to in order to satisfy our needs. If governments tax a good with inelastic demand, such as gasoline, producers don't absorb that cost but rather pass it on to consumers in the form of increased price. So, while liberals champion the 'average American,' their schemes to penalize oil companies ultimately hurt us, the consumers, not the companies.

This situation is particularly distressing in New York state, which has the third highest gas tax rate in the country. Approximately 62.9 cents per gallon of gas sold in New York goes to Albany. If that's not enough, the federal gas tax sends 18.4 cents per gallon to Washington. All together, that amounts to more than 80 cents per gallon going to state and local governments before the 'greedy' oil companies get a penny of profit. Their profits in 2007 and 2008 were only obscene to Hilary and her comrades because they felt left out, not because they actually have any problem extracting the hard earned dollars of good and productive Americans.

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What is so incredible about this scenario is that the politicians have the stones to lambaste the companies who find the oil, pull it up, refine it, and bring it to us to fuel our tremendous prosperity while they do nothing to help this process. Yet demand 80 cents per gallon!? They can only act with such impunity when they know that their complicit media minions won't press them on the issue.

What is important to take away from the low gas prices we're enjoying is that gasoline is subject to the laws of supply and demand, not the whims of self-serving oil tycoons. With people worried about the economy and unemployment on the rise, demand for gas has decreased and so too has the price. When things get better - which they will - we can expect \$4 per gallon again, if not an even higher price. The next time around, however, we should remember our experience and not put the blame on the companies that bring us the gas. Rather, if anybody deserves scolding for putting a burden on the wallets of the American people, it is not the execs at Exxon Mobil but rather the vultures on Capitol Hill and in Albany.

Capitalism 101

Why Free Markets Work

By Zachary Kurtz

There are a lot of buzz words flying around these days depicting the end of laissez-faire (leave it be) economics as we know it. In the mainstream, the current recession following the housing bubble and alleged credit crunch is being blamed on the inherent greed in free market capitalism. The case is being made for further government intervention, through federal bailouts, loose monetary policy, expansionist fiscal policy, increased economic central planning and the nationalization of private assets.

The adoption of pseudo-socialist and Keynesian (a school of economic thought) policies is worrisome because it demonstrates a lack of critical thinking on the part of our political leaders and the false assumption of a consensus among economists about the efficacy of central planning to promote long term economic well being. My goal in this column is to challenge some of the myths about the supposed flaws in a free market system and to introduce readers to the virtues of free market capitalism.

The word capitalist was first used by Karl Marx derisively to bemoan the disparity between the salaries between the owners of production and laborers. Marx, incorrectly, labeled capitalism as inherently perverted because it relied on the exploitation of laborers, who lived on a fixed wage, to benefit the owners of the production. Marx was right and wrong at the same time. What Marx was attacking was not the modern version of free market capitalism but what has become known as mercantilism. Adam Smith, father of classical economics, attacked mercantilism on much the same grounds but came to the conclusion that the individual pursuit of self interest, somewhat unintentionally, produces the best possible outcome for society.

In the mercantilist system, it is possible to exploit labor by benefiting only oneself because markets are not free. Imagine a mega-corporation, that exists as a government-enforced monopoly, which produces the entire nation's food sup-

ply. Since consumers cannot opt to buy food from a competitor (none exist) and not eating is obviously not a good alternative, this megacorp can charge whatever it wants and pay its employees as little as possible to reap in huge profits. However, this situation is only sustainable in an environment where the government excludes the free entry of a competitor into the food market. A large, inefficient megacorp will most likely lose a large share of consumers to an innovative upstart company. Our megacorp now has to choose between finding a way to reduce costs or lose profits to the new company.

This competition is the basis behind why free market capitalism works. Profits are the motivating force behind any business venture but competition for consumer dollars keeps profits in check and breaks up harmful monopolies. The exploitation of laborers is negligible in a free market because employers are competing for the same labor force and keeping employees happy has an added benefit of improving efficiency. In other words, competition helps keep prices low and wages high by forcing entrepreneurs to produce innovative solutions to increase profit margins.

Especially when compared to a socialist system of central planning it is easy to see how a profit-motivated economic system generates wealth across all socioeconomic levels. Entrepreneurs take the risk of investing in innovation with the hopes of an eventual payoff. These innovations increase efficiency and lower costs to increase profits for the shareholders. In a competitive system, however, savings must be passed down to the consumers, or the market share (and profit margins) will be lost to others. The cycle of innovation continues, ultimately lowering the costs of goods and services to consumers while employee wages reach an acceptable equilibrium. By lowering costs, the standard of living for the entire society raises, increasing the availability of 'luxury' goods to everyone.

Given these, not so obvious but well demonstrated, effectiveness of capitalist

system, why do we need a government at all? The government's institutional role is to ensure that the free market remains free. Entrepreneurs must be able to freely enter markets without risk of physical intimidation or other illegal activities. Physical and intellectual property must be protected through property and copyright law, to guard against unreasonable environmental damage, destruction of public or private property and to prevent the 'theft' of ideas.

To demonstrate the effectiveness of profit motivated innovation, consider the opposite extreme, the USSR's communist regime in 1932. This was the height of central planning, where the forced collectivization led to the deaths of millions of Ukrainian farmers in an engineered famine. The Kremlin stole surplus grain and land from the farmers in order to speed along the industrialization process, rather than letting the farmers respond to market forces and innovate on their own terms. The result was not increased productivity during a time of depression, but rather the destruction of a potential highly productive resource, the individual. The fact that individuals respond better to profit than to threat of murder did not stand in the way of central planners but it could help explain the eventual, but inevitable, collapse of the USSR in 1989.

This extreme example doesn't mean that all central planning will lead the way to genocide, but it does highlight the inefficiencies and corruption associated with large, obtrusive, governments. If governments limited themselves to the protection of individual liberties, the free market can work to reduce poverty by the coordination of supply to demand in a competitive environment. When individuals respond to signals from the free market, those signals (ex. prices) represent all the available information in the market. This information helps producers determine what goods are needed and how much should be made, to maximize profit.

When politicians, who cannot possibly have better information than the collective market, make economic deci-

sions based on political information, the outcome is usually to benefit a special interest group, single corporation or socioeconomic group rather than to produce maximum benefits for all. Furthermore, actions taken to increase economic growth on the short term, say between two election periods, often comes at the expense of long term stability.

The saying, "there's no such thing as a free lunch" is particularly apt when it comes to government interference in markets. Governments do not control sources of production, so whenever you hear some politician in the news promising new jobs, price controls, public infrastructure, stimulus packages, bailouts, bureaucracies or even social safety nets remember that the government will have to take money from somewhere else in order to pay for it. These spending projects often result in tax hikes, debt or inflation, which are all ultimately bad for long term economic growth because it hurts investment and consumption in the private sector.

When the government redirects funds, economic growth will only occur if the result is greater efficiency in production. However, governments are notoriously bad at anticipating consumer demand and can cause investors to misread market signals. This helps explain the existence of the recent housing bubble and subprime collapse. Government interference in fiscal and monetary policy lead to over exuberance in these sectors. Subprime and construction markets were inflated for political reasons and collapsed when demand was unable to meet the supply (consumers could not afford the new homes or mortgages).

Free markets work because investor 'greed', which is balanced against the known risk in a decision made by the individual, is the reason innovation gets funded. However, market trends are difficult to predict. Investors make mistakes and often lose money when the product of that investment is rejected by consumers. When government signals are thrown into the mix, investors often take bigger risks, leading to more market volatility, particularly if the outcome is the increase in investment of undesired products. Politicians, through the power of their egos, deign to fix the mistakes of the 'opposition party' by bailing out these failed industries (which contradicts necessary market correction) or shift funds into different sectors to predict new areas of growth. However, unlike private investors risking their

own money, politicians have less qualms risking tax payer money, so there is little guarantee of profit since the new sectors might also fail.

It is through the collusion of politicians and the private sector through which free markets principles are violated and economic growth is affected. In a free market, competition arises spontaneously even without the express need for anti-trust legislation. Wherever there is the potential for profit, an innovative and risk-taking entrepreneur will rise up to invest in their own ingenuity under the belief that they alone can provide a good for consumers. Profits provide the incentive for entrepreneurs to risk their livelihoods and saved capital to invest in themselves. Truly it is entrepreneurs, rather than laborers as Marx assumed, that are the driving force of markets.

However, while competition produces maximum benefits for the group, it isn't always desirable for the profit of the individual. Entrepreneurs, like all people, can let greed get in the way of altruism. This common feature of human nature causes some market players to seek to political havens that allows them to bypass the market process. We've all heard the term government-industrial complex, but people who support them are not 'free market conservatives' as is falsely stated by the mainstream. Government corruption which awards no-bid contracts at higher prices or grants low-interest bonds to private corporations disrupts the process of competition and keeps profit and prices high, at the expense of economic growth. But the corruption is even more spread and more seemingly innocuous than that. Health care legislation which prevents the consumer choice of providers (by tying health insurance to an employer), nationalized or publicly-owned services represents an effective, government imposed monopoly on certain markets. When competition is directly outlawed or mobility is inhibited, consumers and employees cannot flow to alternatives and the result is a decrease in the standard of living.

While citizens in a participatory democracy have the ability to grant their government the power to 'unfree' markets for the perception of social or economic benefit, these voters are usually unaware of the negative consequences due to the effectiveness of political emotional appeals. It is easy to demand redistributive policies that tax the rich to benefit the poor, but what will happen to markets when the

"rich" are left poorer? While it may be true that rich people in our society squander their wealth on luxuries, don't forget that the industries that produce these luxuries gainfully employ many of those who could benefit from a redistribution check, but not more so than getting a regular salary. In addition, this reduces the revenue stream for investment, stifling potential innovations, which keeps the cost of living high for the very people redistribution was supposed to have helped.

Because people do not respond instantly to market forces there can be a delay in the stabilizing forces of a free market. Things like temporary monopolies in emerging markets and corrective recessions all give the impression of high prices or market volatility, the perception of economic health. Politicians who try to implement legislation to impose stability or price controls for short term stability often comes at the expense of long term productivity. Furthermore, they argue that short term volatility is an inherent failure of the free market, which it is actually the market's response to changing conditions or investor mistakes. If the free market is not perfect, it is only because humans are imperfect. However, shouldn't we sooner trust the stabilizing affects of an efficient market with complete information, rather than a central planner with inefficient information and a political agenda?

“There is no disagreement that we need action by our government, a recovery plan that will help to jumpstart the economy.”

— PRESIDENT-ELECT BARACK OBAMA, JANUARY 9, 2009

With all due respect Mr. President, that is not true.

Notwithstanding reports that all economists are now Keynesians and that we all support a big increase in the burden of government, we the undersigned do not believe that more government spending is a way to improve economic performance. More government spending by Hoover and Roosevelt did not pull the United States economy out of the Great Depression in the 1930s. More government spending did not solve Japan's "lost decade" in the 1990s. As such, it is a triumph of hope over experience to believe that more government spending will help the U.S. today. To improve the economy, policymakers should focus on reforms that remove impediments to work, saving, investment and production. Lower tax rates and a reduction in the burden of government are the best ways of using fiscal policy to boost growth.

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