



**VERSUS**  
the student magazine

# the **Teton.** **Experience**

An introspective  
look at Grand  
Teton National  
Park

## **FREELY SPEAKING**

with Michael Wilt

## **TRUE or FALSE**

Does KA discriminate?

## **QUITTING...**

Smoking through Meditation





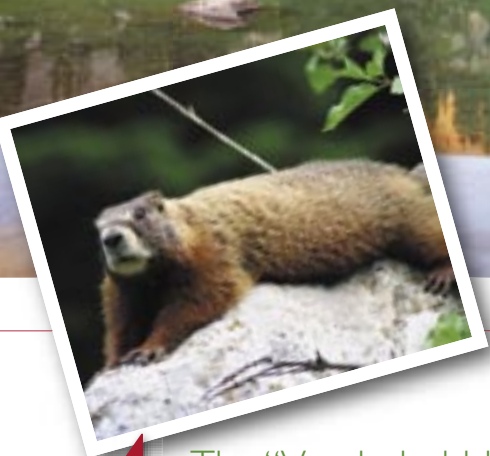
## FEATURE

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story & photos by Greg Roberts



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Photo by: Chris Gerdes



# EDITOR'S NOTE

Robert Proudfoot [versus@vanderbilt.edu]

agree more. He has been the change at Vanderbilt that we all have been wanting. His speech on August 25, 2005 boldly claimed that Vanderbilt is soaring. His first five years were a leap of faith, one that has been extraordinarily successful. Now Vanderbilt is preparing for his "Leap Strategy 2." He is preparing for another giant leap that will propel us to the highest academic clubs in the world.

As I hear these bold plans, I have to say: Let me leap with you! Let students be a part of this change on campus. Let us be fully informed about residential colleges, new buildings, new programs and the broad vision that will shape our university. For we, the students of Vanderbilt, are tethered to this same future as is the rest of Vanderbilt. When Chancellor Gee leaps into the future with bold plans, we need to know when to leap also. Otherwise, he will just find that we are keeping Vanderbilt tethered to the ground with the status quo. Would it not better be if we jumped together?

But how does one plan to convince the student body to leap blindly into the future? Chancellor Gee, take a risk on me! Vanderbilt students are smart and passionate enough to help shape this broad plan. It is the students who most directly know what a student needs to become successful. But being informed just isn't enough. Time and time again, I hear about these infamous student committees that no one has any real access to. These groups are self selecting and do not get a broad scope of the student's voice, not to mention most students don't know they exist. If you want an actual student committee, get the leaders of student organizations (not just SGA) to give their voice. Make your planning meetings public and publicize them. Crossing your fingers and hoping that the student body will flush itself out in four years isn't my idea of leaping forward to the future. Be bold and take the risk of informing the student body of Vanderbilt's goals.

Students shouldn't have to know everything on this campus. It is the responsibility of the administration to involve and inform Vanderbilt students with what will change their lives. We as a student body are waiting to be signaled to jump into the future. When I read Chancellor Gee's address to the Faculty Senate, I couldn't help but scream, "LET ME LEAP TOO!" I want to take the blind leap into the future with Chancellor Gee, but I need to know how. Vanderbilt and its students are tethered to each other and are dependent on each other to soar into the future. Please don't leap without us.

I just recently had the pleasure of reading Chancellor Gordon Gee's speech to the Faculty Senate on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005. As I read through his speech, I must admit that I felt the passion that this man has brought to our university. My chest tightened when I read his bold plans for the future about decreasing tuition costs for poor students, College Halls, multi-discipline research, and Vanderbilt's fight for academic freedom. Say what you want, but Chancellor Gee has the passion, the drive, to take this University to the next step. I have to admire a man that pushes even harder after five years of success to make Vanderbilt soar in directions that were once inconceivable.

Chancellor Gordon Gee has the passion to change this university. He has attacked the old guard of this academic institution to slowly overhaul Vanderbilt into something more than just the next step to a high paying job. I couldn't have agreed more with the man when he boldly proclaimed that in five years every student whose family earns less than \$40,000 will attend Vanderbilt debt free. This is the kind of visionary that I want to lead my university.

Some may argue that these visionary speeches and claims are all rhetoric without substance. That may be so; every leader has his or her stump speeches to rally the troops. But that is precisely what I want in a leader: I want someone who is thinking beyond what we think is possible. I want a Chancellor that has a clear vision of where Vanderbilt is going. I also want a Chancellor that has the savvy to recognize a good idea, even if it isn't his own, and latch on to it until it is followed through. Chancellor Gee is the leader that Vanderbilt has been waiting for to create change.

I firmly believe in Gandhi's saying, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." It is evident that Chancellor Gee couldn't

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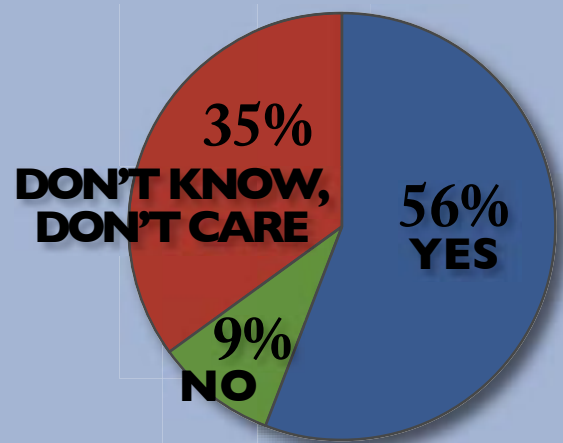
### Mission Statement:

As the student magazine of Vanderbilt University, Versus creates a thoughtful voice through the fusion of in-depth writing and artistic vision.

## The Line Up

Versus polls the Stonehenge line to gauge the pulse of Vanderbilt students:

Should the name of the Student Life Center change to reflect its purpose?



Poll based on the results of 71 respondents in the Stonehenge line.



# A Diet Drink Dilemma

by Liesel Hurder

photos by Colette Hunt

You can't help but be amazed by the plethora of "different" Diet Cokes when you are at a convenience store. Behind the beads of condensation sits the C2 beverage: a Coke with half sugar and half aspartame. Ergo, it has half diet and half original flavor as well as half the calories of a normal Coke. The next row displays Coke Zero: a new drink purported to have zero carbohydrates and zero calories. Perusing the remaining rows and shelves, one is sure to see Diet Coke with aspartame, Caffeine-Free Diet Coke with aspartame, Diet Coke with Splenda, Diet Coke with lime, Diet Coke with vanilla, and Diet Coke with cherry. All of these diet sodas seem to conform to Coke Zero's description as a carbohydrate-free, calorie-free, carbonated cola. What distinguishes Coke Zero from her brethren Diet Cokes? What magic ingredient sweetened Coke Zero that was not in the aspartame, Splenda, or C2 Diet Cokes? After trying to decide between all of these, one leaves Eckerd's with a headache, not a diet soda. If you find yourself wanting a glass of plain water (not sparkling, fruit-flavored, or enriched, mind you), you are not alone. However, an ice-cold, real Coca-Cola Classic (with high fructose corn syrup) should have a place in every diet regimen.



## Fratty.net: A State of Mind

by Lisa Schmitt

Greek life has a huge impact on Vanderbilt, whether you are talking about service to the community or the party scene. People may have heard Greeks throw around the word "fratty", but does anyone know what it really means? Fratty.net, a website dedicated to discussing all things Greek offers this definition: "*Fratty – there is no one definition of this word, it is [a] mere state of mind.*" The page includes discussion of Fratty fashion, the best Fratty Games, Fratty awards, and even a section on the proper use of frat grammar - "*Fratty should be used as an adjective or verb, but not as a noun.*"

The most popular and controversial parts of the site are the message boards labeled *Non-specific frat, Schools/Frats, Style, and Sorostitutes*—look it up in the fratty dictionary. The discussions range from friendly inquiries about rush and people's thoughts on the rankings of frats and sororities to more brutal and offensive posts like "*Heil Hitler! Die Jews die. ZBT sucks.*" and "*It is true there are coloreds in the [KA] Order. I can't figure it out... These are shitty northern chapters that shouldn't exist at all.*" Now, of course, Vanderbilt, being one of the top 20 ranked universities in the nation would never have such coarse, racist, southern elitist posts, right? WRONG. Here are some of the more disturbing Vandy posts:

- "*KD is not tier one by any stretch. They have several blacks and Jews.*"
- "*Betas at Vandy are the worst ever example of gay yankee gel heads.*"
- "*We will get the most southern hardasses at Vandy, beat the hell out of them, send some to ICU, and then all [can] be members of the society.*"

Now, there are some posts that combat these ignorant statements, like the one that quoted Cornelius Vanderbilt. "*Vanderbilt's founding should contribute to strengthening the ties that should exist between all sections of our common country.*" The post goes on to say, in the guest's own words, "*Fuck you guys with your north-south bullshit!*"

So what have learned today? Is fratty.net a fun website full of ridiculous posts that will give you a chuckle thinking about the idiots who wrote them? Or is it a disturbing display of the youth of today who obviously haven't matured or been introduced into the 21<sup>st</sup> century? You be the judge, check it out yourself, but make sure to heed the warning about being a gel-head or a GDI (God damn independent).

by Ashley Ledlow

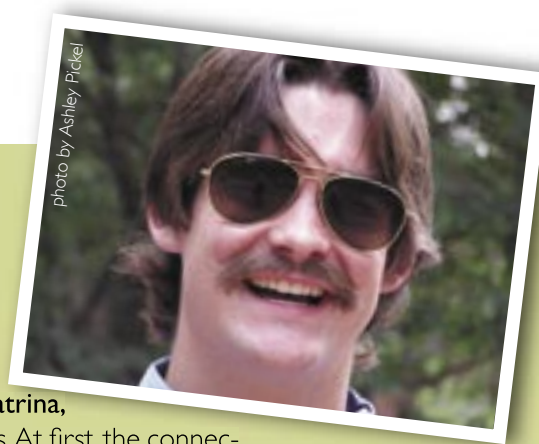
# MAX BEIZER



Whether it is the upbeat melodies, the raw acoustic sound, or the heartfelt lyrics, Max Beizer's first CD, *Self Titled*, shows the future makings of a singer/songwriter. Released in the spring of 2004 on his own record label, Club 98 Records, Max says the most difficult part of making the CD was getting over his self doubts and realizing that if he liked his music, chances were, other people would too.

Max, a senior at Vanderbilt, says that he tries to write music that relates to everyone. Talking about the 'deep' writers of our generation, he says, "Their songs have nice sounding words, but I don't understand what they're saying." Max says he aims for a more laid back feel inspired by his parents as well as greats like Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jimi Hendrix and John Mayer. Check him out at [www.maxbeizer.com](http://www.maxbeizer.com) for upcoming shows, samples of tracks on the CD, and merchandising information.

**For Fans of:** Ben Folds, an upbeat Dispatch, Guster, Pete Yorn  
**Required Listening:** "Zero" and "Smells Like You"  
**Next Performance:** September 30, 2005 at The Pub (Upstairs Sarraff)  
**Noteworthy:** All proceeds of CD sales to be donated to the Red Cross for aid in the Hurricane Katrina relief effort



BRAVO GELATO: ONE SWEET DEAL

Before this year's addition of a gelato and ice cream shop to the Vanderbilt campus, students would have had to hike the few blocks to the ever popular (and overpriced) Ben & Jerry's or Maggie Moo's. Now, tasty dairy treats are never far out of reach at the newest addition to the Branscomb Varsity Market area. Bravo Gelato offers a changing selection of sorbet, ice cream, and their wildly popular gelato each night, as well as frozen fruit bars and baked goods. Worried about the "Freshman Fifteen"? Stress no more; gelato has less fat than the average ice cream and an unrivaled rich taste. If you need to tame your wildest sweet tooth, try the caramel gelato that is as close as it comes to a traditional Italian treat. If you're in the market for something light and fruity, then go with the orange sorbet. More traditional customers will love the classic chocolate. But, if you want the best Bravo Gelato has to offer, ask the employees who all rant and rave over the original Cookie Monster. No cash? No worries at Bravo Gelato, which takes the Vandy Card, making these treats that much sweeter.



by Ashley Ledlow

## The Mustache Relief

by Hart Hagerty

Vanderbilt students are altruistic in their support for the victims of Hurricane Katrina, whether donating their dollars, hosting a charitable cookout, or growing mustaches. At first, the connection between hair follicles and fundraising seems nonexistent, but senior Austin Bauman, founder of *The Mustache Relief*, insists this "unstylish" method is a perfect way to connect people in the Vanderbubble, where it is "easy to feel removed from current events," to the rest of the world. Bauman and a dozen fellow "growers" hope their mustaches will redirect students' focus from books and beer-pong to charity. By donning "Ask me about my mustache!" buttons, inquisitive onlookers will be informed that the growth of their uncanny mustaches is to aid the Vanderbilt Red Cross Club, and then asked to donate. Although "trying to get a date with a mustache has been difficult," Bauman's sacrifice of his upper lip for The Mustache Relief is well worth the cause. This enthusiastic, offbeat approach to helping others certainly makes a bolder statement than the plethora of neon flyers strewn across campus. Maybe the answer to relief is right underneath our noses.

Check out the website: [www.vanderbilt.edu/mustacherelief/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/mustacherelief/)





**Death Cab for Cutie**, the quintessential all-American indie rock band, has come a long way from being their own roadies, setting up their own equipment, playing \$5 shows, and casually mingling with audiences at their own concerts. DCFC has become a mainstay on college campuses across the nation, their success bolstered primarily by their ongoing stint on "The O.C." Their fifth full-length album "Plans", released August 30th, follows the lush and expansive "Transatlanticism", an album that proved that their sound continues to grow along with their audience and fame. Lead singer Ben Gibbard's soulful vocals and expansive lyrics are the driving force behind Death Cab for Cutie's power and influence. While their move from homegrown Barsuk Records to major-label Atlantic has some questioning the band's artistic integrity, they assure fans that the decision to move was not taken lightly and will not compromise their artistry. DCFC may be opening up a new chapter in their collective history, but there is no doubt that indie rock's sweethearts will continue to amaze listeners.



**Death Cab for Cutie performs at the War Memorial Auditorium on October 28th. 8 pm.**

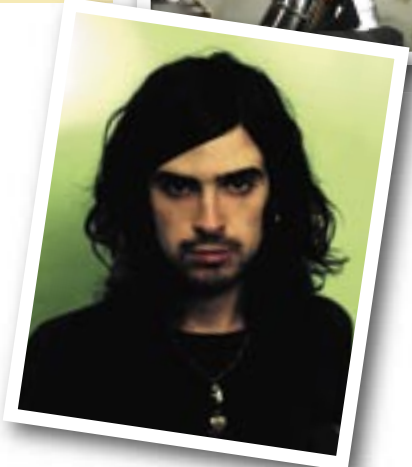
**Sufjan (SOOF-yan) Stevens** is the newest breakout artist on the independent music scene. Much of the hype surrounding him stems from the proposed undertaking of his "50 States Project", a collection of musical anthropological narratives beginning in his home state of Michigan. Each chapter draws upon both historical evidence and personal accounts to fashion a musical collage of each state's unique personality. After the second installment in his continuing saga, "Come On and Feel the Illinoise", Stevens is showing no signs of slowing down. Instrumentation on both albums ranges from oboe to strings to banjo, and his expressive lyrics show that Stevens is no stranger to the writing process. After studying creative writing in college, he taught writing classes until he made his way into the music industry. Stevens is often criticized for his references to Christianity in his songs, but he handles such subjects with diplomacy and candor. "Are you writing from the heart?" the ghost of Carl Sandburg asks him on the third track. His sincere lyrics and hauntingly beautiful vocals leave no doubt in listeners' minds that Sufjan Stevens' music stems from nowhere but his heart.

**Sufjan Stevens played at the Mercy Lounge on September 23.**



Folk artist **Devendra Banhart** began as a homeless, neo-psychedelic musician playing street corners and underground rock clubs. Named after an Indian mystic, the once wandering minstrel got his start recording songs on borrowed four tracks and a friend's answering machine. His 2004 release, "Rejoicing in the Hands", continues his tradition of focusing on crisp, simple acoustic guitar melodies and bare quivering vocals. In "The Body Breaks", a track included on his most recent album, Banhart's southern, bluesy croon evokes memories of sitting in the grass as long summer days blend into longer summer nights. Armed with an acoustic guitar, Banhart shares 1970s largely unknown folk artist Nick Drake's solitude and detachment, minus his overwhelming nihilism. Much of his music has a timeless quality to it, as if it was just waiting to be stumbled upon in a dusty attic decades ago. He has known hardship, but his music is not burdened with self-indulgent pity, giving Banhart's sound a transcendental quality.

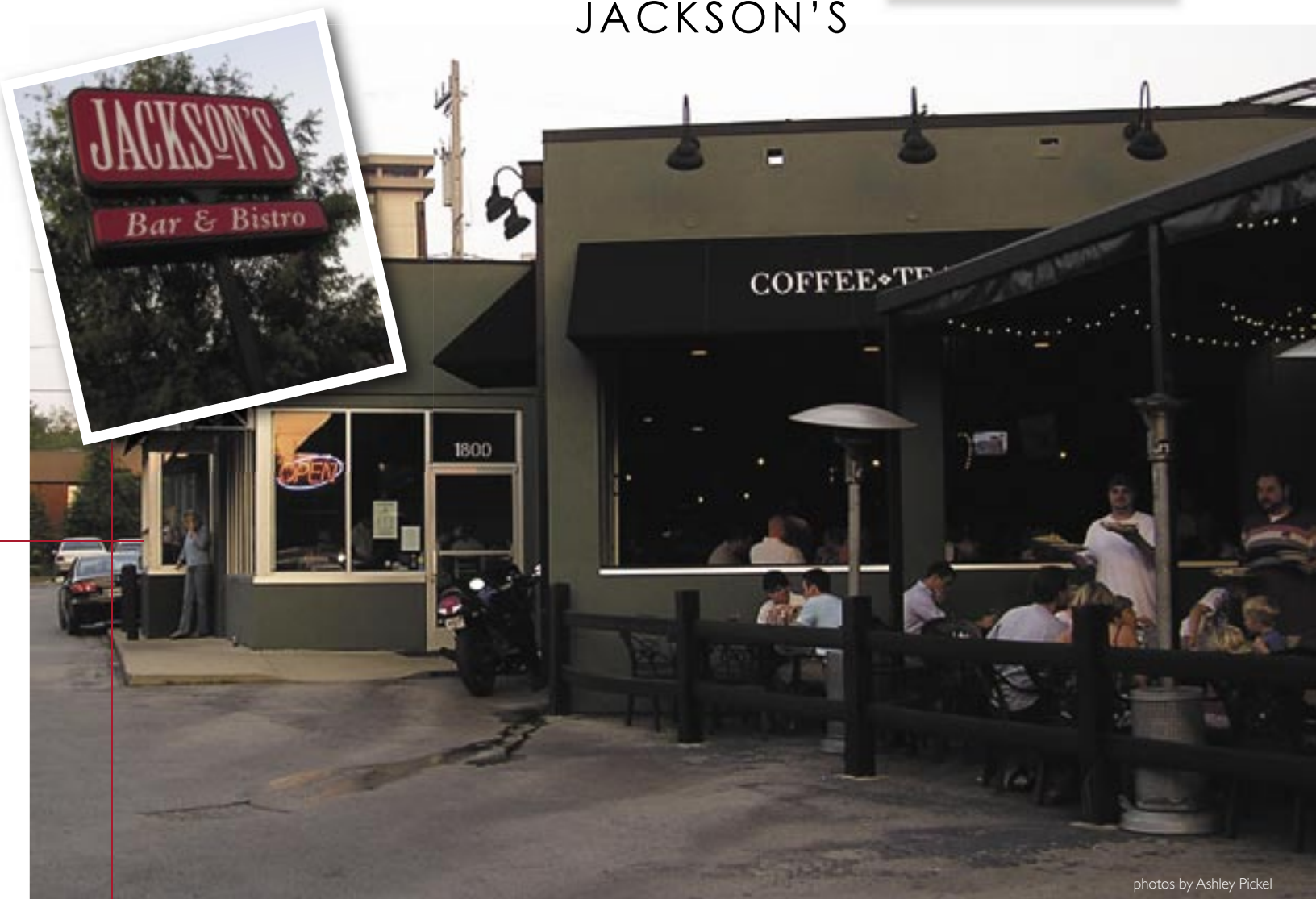
**Devendra Banhart performs at the Exit/In October 14th. 9 pm.**



Think of a female Japanese version of the Ramones and throw a healthy dose of eclecticism into the mix and you've got the **5.6.7.8s**. Originally from Tokyo, the 5.6.7.8s slightly expanded their cult following after inclusion in Quentin Tarantino's "Kill Bill", but they still remain largely independent. Undoubtedly, their most well-known song, the aptly titled 50s throwback "Woo-Hoo", makes you want to take off your Buster Browns and get down at your local sock-hop. This Japanese girl trio has a penchant for grungy guitar-driven melodies, and musical influences range from American garage to surf rock nostalgia. At times, lead singer Ronnie "Yoshiko" Fujiyama's slightly off-kilter vocals leave something to be desired, but this fact is more than made up for by the band's creative songwriting and energetic delivery. Song titles such as "Teenage Mojo Workout" and "Let's go Boogaloo" assure listeners that the 5.6.7.8s aren't just your average girl band hip cats.

**The 5.6.7.8s play the Exit/In October 23rd. 8 pm.**

## JACKSON'S



photos by Ashley Pickel

Looking for an affordable dining scene that boasts a hip, contemporary atmosphere and serves classic café favorites? Whether you want to sip on luscious cocktails, dine on delectable sandwiches and salads, or simply enjoy a steaming cup of rich coffee, Jackson's Bistro is the place to be. Conveniently located within walking distance from campus, Jackson's carries the artsy, urban vibe that is characteristic of Hillboro Village—the surrounding area of shops, restaurants, bars, and art galleries—making it the ideal place for new Vanderbilt freshmen to explore, as well as serving as a familiar, cherished place for upperclassmen and graduate students to retreat. Professors have been seen there as well, relaxing with friends and colleagues.

Sounds like any other café in Nashville, right? Think again. Jackson's is one of the city's most eclectic eateries. Patrons can dine both indoors and out, and the café area inside features a changing art collection. The general theme of the interior is modern in design, as it is mostly black and dark green, with lots of industrial steel and wooden details. Most likely, your server will be dressed in black and will have an array of piercings and tattoos, which adds to the artsy, individualistic attitude that prevails at Jackson's. Though the mood of the café may seem aloof to a

first-time patron, the crowd of “regulars” knows that this is not the case at all.

For one thing, the service is impeccable. The wait time to be served is brief—usually about 10 minutes or so. If you choose to dine outside on the patio, the wait time is virtually zero. During the warm summer months, and right up until mid-October, the patio is open, so that the patrons can sit outside and people-watch while enjoying both lazy summer evenings and Jackson's Green Apple Martinis (a personal favorite of mine). As far as cuisine goes, Jackson's offers light café-style fare, such as soups, salads, and spinach wraps, usually served with chicken or fish. Entrees, such as the Bistro Burger and the Poulet Pasta (a chicken dish served with linguine, garlic, parmesan, and olive oil—a Jackson's classic), are available to those with slightly bigger appetites. Jackson's also offers a vast selection of appetizers, panini sandwiches, cocktails, and coffees. Certainly not to be missed are the desserts, with emphasis on one in particular: Jackson's flash-fried Cookie-Dough Egg Rolls—a great way to cap off a delicious meal. Breakfast and brunch menus are offered as well on the weekends.

**Jackson's hours:** Monday – Thursday, 11am – 2am; Friday, 11am – 3am; Saturday – Sunday, 10am – 3am.





*This quiet walkway attached to the back of Calhoun Hall provides the ideal backdrop for an afternoon of serene reading on a beautiful, warm day. The Vanderbilt mural itself is a campus treasure.*



# FIVE VANDERBILT'S SPOTS *Secret*

*From tranquil outdoor locations for peaceful reading to hidden eateries on the card, learn about the Vandy spots you never knew were there...*

*photos by Ashley Pickel*



*Central Library is not as uncomfortable as was previously thought. Check out the sixth floor's spacious red chairs when claiming a new study nook or giving in to the need for a mid-day nap.*



Suzie's Espresso, located in the MRB III Building, serves coffee and snacks on the card to avid Biology students and professors.

3



4

The courtyard of the MRB III Building serves as another secret, natural spot on campus. Digress on the way to Stevenson one day and run into this pretty quadrangle.

Subway, a rival of Quizno's for favorite campus sandwiches, along with Taco Bell, Pizza Hut and Ben & Jerry's, are located in the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital Food Court. These locations, as well as the Medical Center McDonald's, are all on the card.

5



**I**n 1973 the Supreme Court ruled that abortion should be legalized under an inferred “right to privacy” found in the Constitution. Thirty-two years later, proponents of *Roe v. Wade* fear that the landmark decision may be overturned, eliminating a woman’s right to choose.

**The composition of the court is changing in the wake of the retirement of Justice Sandra Day O’Connor and the death of Chief Justice William Rehnquist.** Some liberal proponents of abortion rights believe that the filling of these vacancies by staunch conservatives could be the death sentence for *Roe v. Wade*.

**Judge John Roberts, originally nominated by President Bush to replace Justice O’Connor, is now destined for Rehnquist’s position.** His designation as both a Catholic and a conservative has caused women’s rights activists and other liberal groups to demand close scrutiny of both his past statements and present views on the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

**Based on Roberts’ conservatism and written opinions, he is best classified as a strict constructionist.** Depending on the strength of his convictions, it is this view that might lead Roberts to call for a reversal of the 1973 decision.

***Roe v. Wade* was controversial not only because it dealt with the touchy moral subject of abortion but also because the decision was based on an inference – something with which strict constructionists do not agree.**

**The Supreme Court under Chief Justice Warren Burger** ruled that abortion should be legal because United States citizens have a right to privacy. This right to privacy is not specifically enumerated in the Constitution; however, it is inferred from the ninth and fourteenth amendments.

**Some strict constructionists still claim that there is no “right to privacy” and thus *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned.** The important matter for those concerned is where Roberts stands on

# john roberts AND roe v. wade

by Meredith Sellers

**“I feel threatened as a woman that my rights over my body could be taken away in an instant,”** said Vanderbilt student Gracyn Sansbury. She and others who share her opinion want to make sure that Roberts will not revoke the ruling.

**Many wonder if Roberts’ Catholic faith, whose doctrine teaches that abortion is wrong in any situation, might influence his ability to make impartial decisions on abortion rights; however, others are sure that he can put away his private convictions to make court judgments.**

**“I think Roberts’ religion influences his personal beliefs, but will not impact his professional decisions,”** says Catholic freshman Heather Benzmilller. “He has been appointed to represent all of America, not just Catholic America.”

**It may not be Roberts’ Catholicism that poses the biggest threat to *Roe v. Wade*.** Those worried about the fate of the decision should perhaps be looking at Roberts’ philosophy on the Constitution instead of his religious preferences.

**Traditionally, there have been two views on the interpretation of the Constitution:** strict constructionism, which holds that the Constitution is an unchanging document, and loose constructionism, which takes a more liberal stance, maintaining that the founding fathers wished for the Constitution to adapt to the needs of Americans as the times change.

the issue.

**Early on in the nominations process, Senator Dianne Feinstein, the only female member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, promised to question Roberts about *Roe v. Wade* during his late-September hearings.** She and others have been particularly anxious about his opinions expressed in documents collected from his service in the Justice Department.

**While some memos undoubtedly show that Roberts does not agree with the abortion rights decision, his opinion on judicial precedent will also play a role in whether he seeks to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.**

**Roberts’ recent statements on precedent seem to indicate that he will not push to reverse the decision, but despite his seeming respect for past rulings, uncertainty still surrounds his possible actions once on the Court.**

**Only as Roberts assumes his position and the dynamics of the new court unfold will the immediate fate of *Roe v. Wade* become clearer.** Even after Roberts’ time, though, the legality of abortion may still be questioned based not on the morality of the act but instead on the validity of the “right to privacy.”

CNN.com was used as a source in the writing of this article.



# W

hen the days are warm and sunny, and skies clear, you have probably seen these guys around, hanging out on

Alumni Lawn, just having a good time, doing nothing other than juggling. Yes, we have all seen them, sharing the lawn with the usual rugby players or ultimate frisbee fanatics. Not only are these guys fans of juggling, but also they are part of the Juggling and Physical Arts Club (JPAC), a club that consists of students who enjoy juggling and different types of physical arts. They juggle various items from balls to clubs to diabolos (Chinese yo-yos), and even staff spinning. Other physical arts include all things circus-oriented, such as gymnastics, acrobatics, and break dancing.

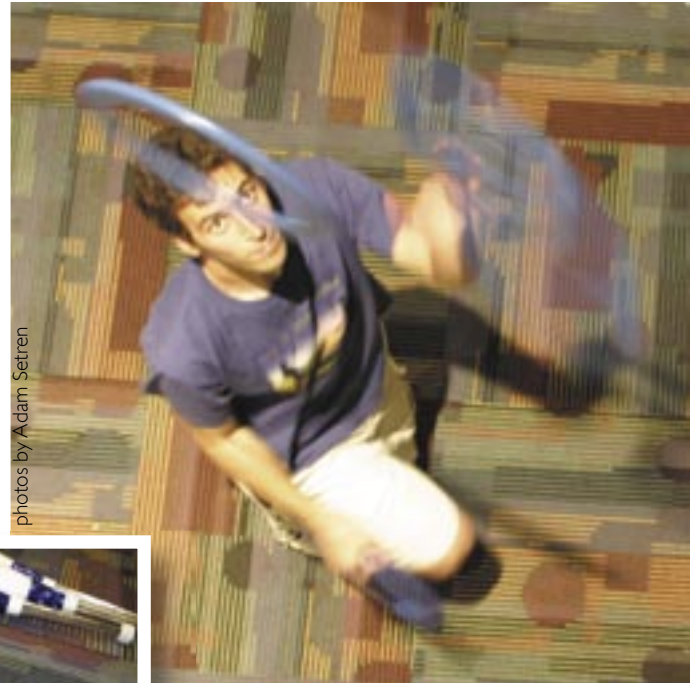
JPAC was founded as a small group a little more than two years ago by Daniel Schuler, current president of JPAC and a senior in the School of Engineering, but now people are lining up to join this fun-filled, relaxed, and interactive club.

"We're open to ideas. It's all about physical comedy. We don't take ourselves too seriously. Just about anything goes," said Schuler.

At the meetings of this free club (It's true... no member dues!), members come and share their ideas with the other members, then practice commences.

Since the end of last year, break dancing

throughout the year. They recently performed at Fall Fest, and will host a big show in March. In the past, JPAC has performed at Vanderbilt men's and women's basketball games, has opened for the Dodecs' spring concert and the Show Choir's concert, and has helped the Asian American Student Association with their diabolo act at the Asian New Year Festival. The club continues working on its upcoming events since it remains relatively new and membership is still growing. JPAC encourages the participation of guest acts, such as dance groups (tap dancing, Irish dancing, etc.), in their shows and events. "We perform throughout the year doing volunteer work, but our main goals really focus on teaching people how to juggle,



photos by Adam Setren

Graduate student Jacob Weiss juggles hoops at the Juggling Club meeting in the Student Life Center.

## The Juggling and Physical Arts Club: A lot more than just Juggling!

by Linda Vongkhamchanh

ing has become a bigger component of JPAC, attracting another type of crowd. Andrew Lin, vice-president of JPAC, helped incorporate break dancing into the club. Juggling and break dancing have stark differences, but nonetheless, members can get involved in one or both of the activities.

"Sometimes there's a crossover, and sometimes it's separate, and that's fine," said Schuler. "We just want everyone who is interested to do what they like."

However, the meetings are separate for break dancing and juggling, since break dancing requires a very different environment. The break dancers will be making trips to Rocketown, a youth club and music venue, to take part in break dancing competitions with other area performers and kids.

JPAC plans on holding various events

performing, and having a good time," said Schuler.

Volunteer work is another component of the club. The members have a great time doing what they love to do, but at the same time they share their talents with children at surrounding schools and the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital. JPAC has helped Vanderbuddies, a Vanderbilt tutoring and mentoring organization for Nashville kids, with their events in the past. The club comes out to play with the kids, teaches them how to juggle, and just has fun with them. It could quite possibly be one of the easiest and most rewarding things one could do. Furthermore, the members are willing to become guest performers for any campus organization in need of their help. This month, JPAC is helping other organizations

be the club for you. Often students do not know how to get involved, lack the commitment, or do not have time available, but JPAC is a very relaxed and interactive club that accepts everyone. No qualifications are necessary. "We're really laid back, and if you come up and tell us you just want to learn how to juggle, someone's going to be with you right then and there to show you the ropes. We don't care what your skills are. You might think you can't juggle, but I assure you that you can, with just a little practice. Come out and have fun!" said Schuler. The club is in your hands, so go out on a sunny day, let loose, and have a little fun with JPAC!

[www.vanderbilt.edu/juggling](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/juggling)

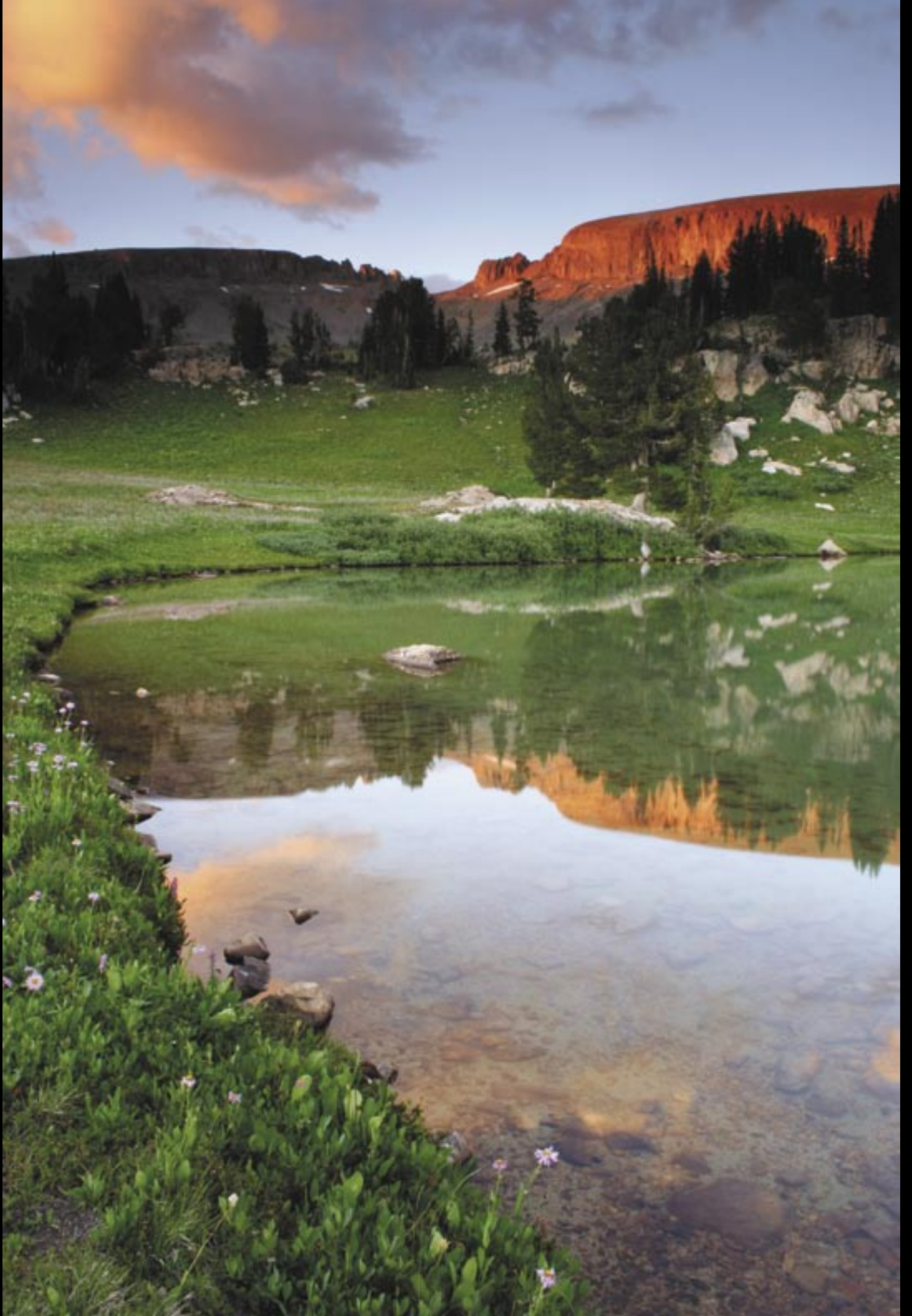
# Grand Tetons

experiencing the

For many visitors, Grand Teton National Park is no more than a brief stop on the way to a certain bigger, more famous park called Yellowstone, just thirty miles to the north. But for someone who has spent an entire summer living and working in the park, one thing became obvious – the Tetons possess a beauty and majesty that cannot be given justice by a casual passing through.

story and photos by Greg Roberts

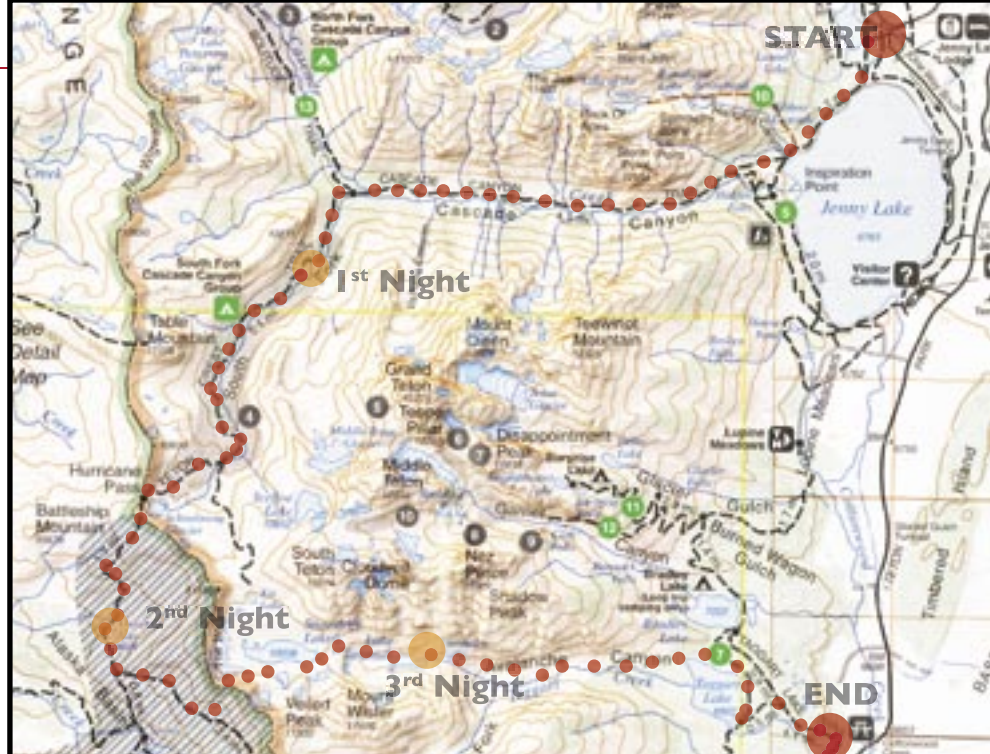






# Grand Teton

The route highlighted traces the writer's 20-mile backpacking trip through some of the most scenic terrain the park has to offer. The latter half of the trek veers off the designated trail through the very rugged but rewarding Avalanche Canyon.



Map: National Geographic Trails Illustrated.

**I** still don't know what the woman in the red dress was doing on the trail. She was fiftyish, blonde, and had white sneakers to go with her blazing red dress. It was not a modest red, but lipstick red, red enough to make her a garish eyesore in Grand Teton National Park's landscape of greens, grays and browns. But there she was, strolling along the hot, dusty trail to Taggart Lake. And the oddest thing about her was not that she was wearing a long red dress to hike on a hot summer day, but the fact that she did not think she was odd. She was oblivious, to me and to everyone else on the trail, oblivious to how she clashed so magnificently with her surroundings. She was clearly absorbed in her own world where it is normal to wear a long red dress and white sneakers to go for a ramble in the mountains.

But as I walked this last mile of my three-night backpacking trip, it became clear to me that she was an ambassador of sorts, sent to welcome me back from the wilderness. She was the ambassador of all the weird quirks in the human race, the ambassador of "civilized" society. I wanted to run away right then and there, off the trail and up into the mountains from which I had just emerged—back to the uncivilized, where there is nothing so absurd as this woman in a red dress, where everything makes sense and has order and is as it should be. But I did not run, and I walked on past her. She made me sad in an odd sort of way, because it was so apparent that she just doesn't *know*. She doesn't *know*, and neither does the family struggling to push their umbrella-shaded stroller down the bumpy trail, nor does the portly family that asked me between short breaths how much farther it was to the lake when they were only ten minutes removed from their car. Most of the tourists hiking that mile and a half to the lake simply don't know what is back there beyond Taggart Lake—the explosive fields of wildflowers, the snowfields that are still to be found in August, and the brilliant blue bowls of water nestled beneath the craggy spires. And it strikes me with a sort of melancholy that they do not know of these things.

I can say this because I know a thing or two about these summer vacationers. As a ranger, I stood in a booth at a park entrance station talking to them all summer. It was my duty to greet the endless stream of "visitors" (we weren't supposed to call them tourists) to Grand Teton, checking their passes, taking their money, and

answering their questions. Brilliant questions, like, "Are the salmon spawning right now?" and, "Is that salt on the mountains?" and the perennial favorite, "Are we in Yellowstone?" Often I simply had to orient them on Grand Teton's complicated road map, which essentially consists of two highways. I have been a tourist numerous times in my life, and now that I have dealt with them as an insider, I never want to be one again.

So as I finished up this hike I was dreading the fact that I would be at work later that afternoon. It is hard to go from sleeping under the stars and seeing maybe a dozen people in the course of a day to confinement in a cramped booth and seeing a dozen consecutive carloads in the span of a few minutes. But I really can't complain, even if a thousand women in red dresses and white sneakers who could barely hike up a hill came through my gate each day, because that was my ticket to a summer of backpacking in the mountain paradise of northwestern Wyoming. And I had three nights worth of bliss to sustain me through the next five days of work before I would rejuvenate myself all over again the next weekend. It was a weekly cycle.

**T**his trip in particular still stands out to me, not just because it was my first real off-trail adventure, but because it was punctuated quite unexpectedly at the end by the lady in the red dress. My buddy Stew and I planned to do this trip of 20 miles over three nights, starting the afternoon we got off from the 6:00 a.m. shift at work, and this really was not strenuous mileage considering that we had day-hiked 21 miles together earlier in the summer. But it was far better this way, because it allowed us time to stop and admire things, such as the black bear that wandered up the trail behind us that first evening on our way up Cascade Canyon. I enjoyed this black bear more than most of the others I saw that summer, because Stew and I had this one to ourselves. Not another hiker passed by on the trail while we watched him; that bear was ours and ours alone. He was not mine and forty other people's, as is usually the case during the massive bear jams that pile up along the highway when one is spotted. With such sightings, you have to share the bear with a bunch of frenzied families running around trying to get a picture and endangering their kids in the process. Out



on the trail, you are completely free from such madness.

There was also the pair of moose munching away further up the trail on the grassy, willowy island in the middle of Cascade Creek. I must have seen a few dozen moose in the three months I spent out there, but I never became jaded enough to tire of watching them. And as much as I enjoy having an animal to myself, I pointed the moose out to passing hikers because it is a wonderful experience to sit and contemplate such whimsical creatures. We all may know what a moose is supposed to look like, but until you actually see one, you don't realize that it is basically an enormous deer with a very curious rack of antlers and facial features more like a camel's. A moose makes you realize that God or Mother Nature or whatever you believe in must have a sense of humor to make something so ridiculous seem so majestic at the same time. After two encounters with the local fauna in as many hours, I couldn't help wondering how many of the roadside tourists ever got to experience an animal in the wild with no one else around.

Before long, we decided to leave the moose alone because the sun was sinking lower behind the mountain skyline that surrounded us, and there is nothing worse than cooking and setting up camp in the dark. After all, in the wilderness, nightfall means *night*, not just a darker time of day when the street lamps come on. It is an inky darkness that makes you wonder where your feet are and makes a city-dweller appreciate for the first time the luminous brilliance of a full moon, when it is truly a second sun. Sure, we had headlamps, but that is only for when nature calls in the middle of the night; such artificial lights ruin the beauty and mystery of total darkness. I thought what a shame it is that most of the tourists who prefer their cozy log cabins will never know what it is like to immerse yourself in the utter darkness of the unknown.

That first night we landed somewhere right below the massive bulk of the mightiest mountain in the park, the Grand Teton. The more I stared at it, the more its 13,770 feet seemed to loom larger and larger, until I felt small and insignificant. Beneath such enormity, I was helpless to stop that sense of smallness from creeping into the very core of my being, until I soon accepted it as truth. Now acutely aware of our puniness, we pitched our tents at a site near the creek, amidst a landscape of rocks and stunted evergreens, with wildflowers strewn about. Our proximity to the water reminded me how wonderful it is to camp next to cascading water, and not just because it is easier to fetch our meals. Rather, the steady music of running water plays in your ears all night; it lulls you to sleep and courses through your dreams, washing over your soul without you ever knowing. I wished longingly that all the tourists who lined up at my gate could learn to take the time to appreciate small wonders such as this.

**T**he next day we had to climb, but I no longer dreaded carrying a 30-lbs pack 2,000 feet up a mountain pass, because by now I could breathe deeply of the oxygen-depleted air as if I was back home at sea level in Florida. Such a climb only gave me a sense of well-being and accomplishment. On the way up to Hurricane Pass—as happens every so often on the trail—I was reminded of that dirty, crowded world outside the park boundaries. I was reminded by the sad face of Schoolroom Glacier. It was melting and dirty, and had a desperate look about it as it sat helpless beneath the noonday sun. The trail to the pass switchbacked right by it, allowing me to walk right up to the glacier and touch it. And it was almost like touching a dinosaur, because it is not only massive and ancient, but also almost extinct. It still clung to the mountainside, but when

I looked at the hollowed bowl of turquoise water a few hundred feet beneath it, I thought of how it probably once extended all the way down into that rock-rimmed bowl, or even beyond. I was further saddened to think how Glacier National Park just 900 miles to the north is supposed to lose all of its remaining namesakes within the next 30 years. More importantly, I wondered then how many of the millions of people who visit these parks each year really care.

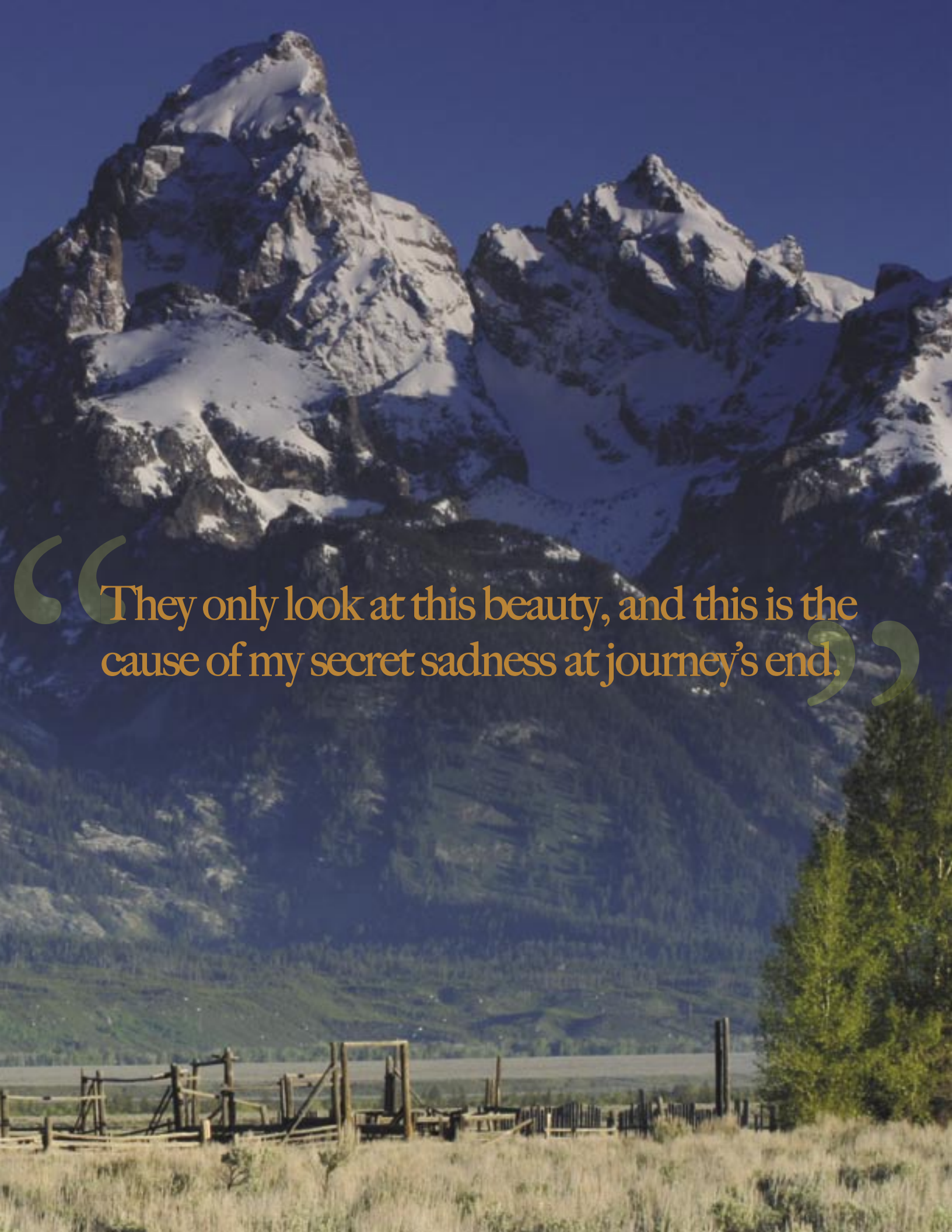
At the top of Hurricane Pass, however, it was impossible not to feel good, even giddy. You could look back and see a trinity of peaks—the Grand, Middle, and South Teton—all lined up across from you, soaring above the surrounding landscape like a cathedral, and indeed they were my cathedral in that moment. From the pass you could look out into the distant farmlands of Idaho, and also spy the southern reaches of the Teton Range, with new peaks beckoning to be explored. And this is why I love mountain passes so much; they are the crossroads of the old and the new. They put everything into perspective, showing you both where you came from and where you are going. I could indeed see the splendor of where I was going, that big beautiful crater of contrasts called Alaska Basin. In late summer, all the space that is not occupied by lingering patches of snow or bare glaciated rock is filled by the most amazing displays of wildflower imaginable—more beautiful than any garden—and it is all encased by canyon-like walls of rock.

I could try to describe how amazing it was to camp there at Sunset Lake in such surroundings, but that wasn't even the highlight of the second night. The best part was talking with Stew after dinner, standing in an open meadow at sunset. We talked about things that mattered, like what we wanted to do with our lives and how we might find fulfillment. I found it infinitely refreshing to have a conversation of such substance, one that was thought-provoking and not merely idle chatter. I realized then that there is a dearth of such conversations in my life—and just about everyone else's. This made me even gladder to be on the trail, where you talk a lot less about useless things and fruitless gossip, because the beauty around you does all the talking. It is only worth interrupting if there is something that needs to be said. The clarity of the pristine environment enabled me to wrap myself in thought and make some sense of certain big questions that have long puzzled me. At the same time, my pensive mood led me to wonder if we have become so used to wrapping ourselves in mindless conversation that we are afraid to hear ourselves think.

**I**t was not until the next day, however, that the real fun began, when we finally left the familiarity of the designated trail. Our planned off-trail route took us up a scree slope to the top of a shallow divide about 1,000 feet above us to the east. From there we would drop down to Snowdrift Lake in Avalanche Canyon, right below an awesome rock face simply known as the Wall. So we began climbing up towards the divide, slipping frequently along the way, because the slope was steep and scree by its very nature is quite loose. I distinctly remember at one point—about two-thirds of the way up—looking to my side and realizing that the slope angle was a solid 45 degrees or worse. It was unwise to be there when there were just loose rocks and gravel for footing, and I am forever indebted to my trekking poles for saving me from a long slide. Once we did make it to the divide, lo and behold, there was a huge, sheer chunk of ice awaiting, blocking our passage like a beached whale in a tiny lagoon. This was slightly disconcerting after our struggle to get there, but such concerns quickly took a backseat. We were simply too awestruck by the giant panorama of rock that is the Wall,







“They only look at this beauty, and this is the cause of my secret sadness at journey’s end.”



and I was delighted by the brutal simplicity and accuracy of its name. I was also overcome with gratitude that I was not bound to the beaten path in the manner of most tourists—then I could never have marvelled at this awe-inspiring sight.

Since we certainly weren't going to turn back, we just went around the ice, skirting its edges and butt-sliding (I would call it glissading, but that is a term reserved for snow) down the loose rock. Our initial goal was the splendidly teal Snowdrift Lake, which glistened below us at 10,000 ft. Now the only thing worse than ascending a scree slope is descending one, and we quickly grew tired of feeling like we were going to start an avalanche with every step. So as soon as we reached a snowfield with a mellower grade we sat on our butts—packs and all—and glissaded down several hundred feet, letting our own barbaric yawp sound over the mountains. Stew had carried an ice axe all this way, so his glissading was nice and controlled, but I was without one. I flew down more like a kamikaze, having only my feet for brakes, and I wouldn't have it any other way. By the time I reached the bottom, there was snow in every crease of my pack and clothing, my butt was slightly numb, and I was laughing giddily from the rush.

people were sleeping soundly in their lodgings while the storm raged around me, and I pitied them.

Yet there was also a bittersweet feeling in my heart because it was the last night of the trip and—despite my best efforts—visions of the long lines of cars at work kept creeping into my head. Fortunately, I had more to look forward to on the last day, including another marvelously daunting stretch of scree and boulder fields, which gave way to the unkempt trail leading out of Avalanche Canyon. After we were done having fun on the slopes, I found a new revel in tromping through the mud near the lower elevations. Our waterproof boots were unable to keep out the copious amounts of water that had pooled along the path and were clinging to the brush. We also had to duck and hop over fallen trees on the way back to the maintained trail, our feet squishing gleefully in our boots. I am not being facetious in calling these experiences the joys of hiking off trail—there were none of the tourist families and odd couples, with their bear bells and fanny packs, that I eventually found myself surrounded by on the Taggart Lake trail. I couldn't help but feel out of place carrying a heavy pack down this trail where a bottle of water is sufficient, smelling of three-and-a-half-days-worth of sweat while half the women on the trail were wearing

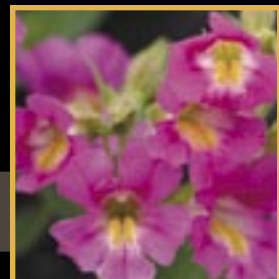
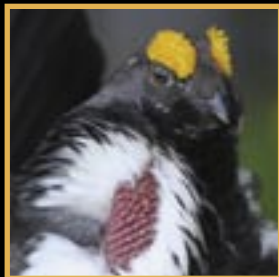
“She was clearly absorbed in her own world where it is normal to wear a long red dress and white sneakers to go for a ramble in the mountains.”

Our final obstacle for the day was to scramble down the boulder fields to Taminah Lake, which lay 1,000 feet below Snowdrift. Boulders fields are one thing, but they are something else when most of the 1,000 feet is lost in a half-mile. I am convinced that if I had to negotiate that punishing drop-off everyday, I would need a knee replacement by the time I was 30. But we made it nonetheless, our wobbly legs the only sign of wear. We camped that night on the lip of Taminah Lake in the most torrential downpour I have ever weathered from inside a tent. It was a tempest complete with tropical storm-force winds and the kind of lightning that is so close it makes you jump out of your skin with each crack. The buffeting gales caused me the great inconvenience of having to leave the comfort of my sleeping bag and—in just boxer briefs and a shirt—re-stake my tent so that it wouldn't flap away in the wind. When I emerged from my flimsy shelter, the frigid drops were pelting me sideways, and as I went around securing each stake I envisioned myself as one of those sailors you see in movies, struggling with his ship's rigging in a fierce storm. When I got back in the tent, instead of feeling cold and wet, I found myself feeling alive as ever, invigorated by the fury of the alpine weather. I reflected then on my day and the joys of off-trail travel—how much fun it was to slide down snowfields without skis and how fortunate we were to have not taken any undesired tumbles. Then I thought of how most

makeup.

But I realized that I was not terribly out of place when the woman in the red dress confronted me. She jarred me back to the absurd reality of the world we live in, so that my fresh recollections of wildflowers and summer snowfields and towering peaks were pushed into the recesses of memory. This is always a depressing thing, but instead of resentment I felt a sort of compassion for this woman, because it was so clear that she didn't know what I had discovered while backpacking. Now maybe she is not physically able or simply does not care to know, as is the case with so many of the people who visit the park—I am not foolish enough to think that everyone should like what I like. But she and all the other visitors to Grand Teton are there for a reason, and in most cases it is because they appreciate the beauty of the place. But they only *look* at this beauty, and this is the cause of my secret sadness at journey's end. I want to grab them, shake them and somehow impart to them what they are missing, so that they can know what I have *experienced*. There is such an enormous difference between venturing from your car for a few hours and immersing yourself in the totality of such beauty. And so I cannot help but lament the fact that more people do not choose to put aside their red dresses and allow themselves to be bruised and battered and fatigued and refreshed and nurtured all at the same time, in the way that only the mountains can do. ■





**Grand Teton National Park**, located next to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, draws over three million visitors from around the world each year. Known for its picturesque landscape and stunning array of wildlife, Grand Teton National Park encompasses 485 square miles, the backbone of which is the 40-mile Teton Range. Its highest peak, the Grand Teton, has an elevation of 13,770 feet. Tourists travel from around the world to catch glimpses of its native wildlife and soak in the natural landscape year round.

Grand  
Tetons



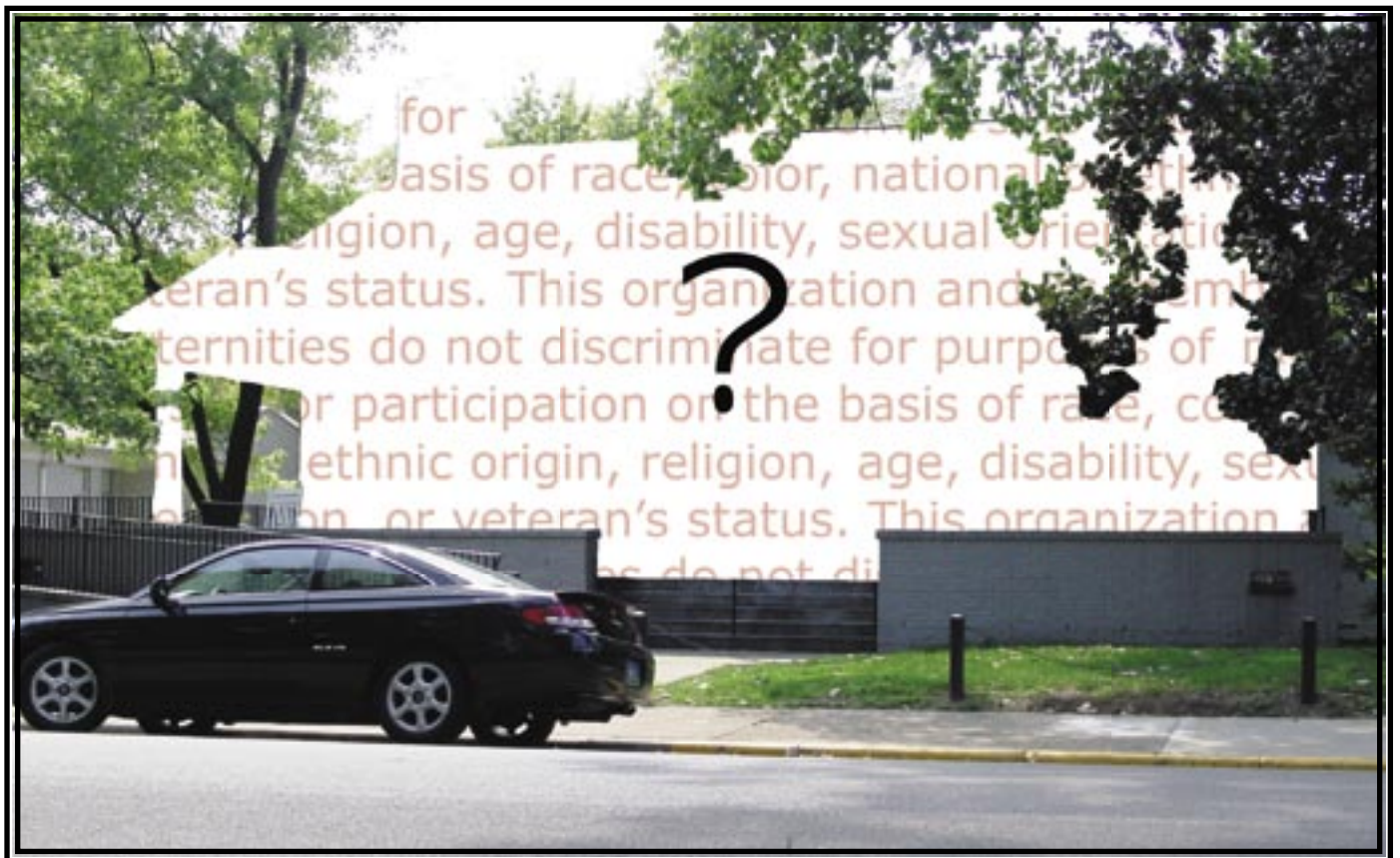
Grand  
Tetons





## MYTH: Kappa Alpha Order discriminates based on race at fraternity parties

*Versus researches the myth of Kappa Alpha restricting individuals to social functions based on race. After conducting a two-week study on the Kappa Alpha's fraternity parties, Versus found no clear signs of racial discrimination. Read on for Kappa Alpha's response and our report.*



# Kappa Alpha Order

## President Lowery Crews

Versus informed Kappa Alpha Order about the study and its findings of no racial discrimination. Here is a shortened discussion about Versus's study, stereotypes, and the IFC guest list policy. The extended version can be found at [www.versusmag.org](http://www.versusmag.org).

### There has been a rumor that KA discriminates against minorities. What's your reaction?

I think that it is a stereotype that has existed for a number of years and is a result of misconceptions and the reputation of past members who were kicked off campus. Since we have come back on campus, we have done everything possible to erase those negative stereotypes. We don't discriminate and anyone is allowed to come to parties that is a friend of a member.

### Do you have any black men in your fraternity?

No. There are no African American members at this time. As long as I've been a member there has never been an instance where someone has said, "I don't want this person to join because he's a minority." It's never been an issue we have had to deal with. Minorities are more than welcome to rush and, if she or he knows a brother, attend the parties. I think there are a lot of factors involved but it is definitely not discrimination by any means.

### Is KA taking any steps to curb this rumor of racial prejudice? Can you take any steps?

I think so. I think it is just a matter of getting out into the Vanderbilt Community and getting involved with other organizations that are predominately made of minority members. We did something last semester with BSA [Black Student Alliance] and we've had an activity in the past with the Multicultural Students Association. We will be participating in the NPHCs [National Pan-Hellenic Conference] stomp fest on October 13.

### Do you feel the guest list restricts your ability to outreach to other parts of the community?

I think the IFC alcohol policy is setup in a way to limit the liability of fraternities and I think there are other things that we can do to open up our parties to more involvement to minority students. Our national organization does not allow us to have open parties. Liability issues are the main reason we have to follow these guidelines.

### How are minorities supposed to attend KA and other fraternity events if they never know anyone to get on the guest list?

That's why we encourage our members to get involved in other organizations to meet people outside the fraternity.

### Is the whole female undergraduate population on KA's guest list?

No. We try to create a guest list for every event a week in advance and it's usually just adding names that we've forgotten. It's difficult to get everyone that we know to get to the party; we always unintentionally leave someone out. The guest list is not a perfect process, but it is a requirement nonetheless.

### But none of the women in our study were not on the guest lists of any fraternity. It seems that the IFC Alcohol Policy has some issues with letting in non-members that are not on the guest list...

If the study was conducted in the first couple of weeks, there was definitely more leeway in those first few weeks because it's the beginning of the semester. Obviously we don't know all the freshmen females and transfer students so it's difficult if they want to attend a party. We don't necessarily know all their names.

### Do you feel the guest list restricts your ability to outreach to other parts of the community?

I think the IFC alcohol policy is setup in a way to limit the liability on fraternities and I think there are other things that we can do to open up our parties to more involvement to minority students.

### Any further comments?

It's an issue that we're sort of hesitant to talk about. We don't exactly know how to go about addressing it. We had a president's retreat earlier in the year and I was able to interact on a more personal level with the NPHC fraternity and sorority presidents. They actually confronted me about some of the racial stereotypes and I was able to talk to them. Things were so much more clear after that. It's just a matter of it being difficult for us to go up to them and address the issues. But if they come to us, we're very receptive to their opinions and want to clarify things as best as possible. NPHC is hosting a stomp fest that we're participating in on October 13. We actively participate in their philanthropy events and we encourage them to do the same in ours.

## Versus Magazine has conducted a study to determine if Kappa Alpha discriminates based on race for entrance to its fraternity parties.

The reason for this project was the deeply rooted rumor that Kappa Alpha presently discriminates by racial ethnicity. This rumor was gleaned from numerous sources within the Vanderbilt community. Versus, in an attempt to discover the truth about this rumor, decided to conduct a research experiment.

The first task of our experiment was to establish the goals for this study. Since one of the objectives of the Greek parties is to provide a social atmosphere for undergraduate students, its accessibility of fraternity parties was focused on as a testable indicator.

### METHOD:

After it was decided that fraternity parties would be the subject of research, a relatively valid model for testing this rumor in the real world had to be formed. First, the fraternity in question cannot be aware of the research going on or it will skew the results. Secondly, other fraternities would have to be tested as controls. Thirdly, a proper research model needed to be crafted to properly isolate race while minimizing all other factors.

The research experiment was conducted over two weekends with over 30 individuals participating in the experiment. It was agreed that two weekends would be enough to get a fairly good, yet limited, scope of the parties. As a control, we randomly selected two other fraternity parties to study. This allowed us to compare our results with other fraternity policies. The research model was simple. The participants would separate into groups by race with mixed genders and attempt to enter each fraternity house selected for that night. The racial groups in this study were black, white, brown, and Asian. Each racial group had both male and female participants of each race. Independently of each racial group, one single male of each race would also attempt to gain entrance to each house. Men and women were used in the experiment to try to minimize the sex variable. The research was conducted with a thirty minute time period starting at 11:15pm.

### RESULTS:

After a two-week study, Versus found that there was no clear racial discrimination at Kappa Alpha's fraternity parties. Females of any racial makeup were free to enter at any time. Males had to be on the IFC mandated guest list in order to gain access to Kappa Alpha. It was found, however, that these guest lists are somewhat arbitrary. There were two instances where non guest list males were able to gain access. The controls for this research enforced the guest list policy.



# Interfraternity Council Alcohol Policy

Article II, Section D:

A guest list is required for each social event. In admitting guests on the guest list, the non-drinking party patrol member must follow the standard sign-in procedure as stated. The guest list must be finalized at any point prior to the event.

similarly. Sigma Chi and AEPi had parties that both male and females participants could gain entrance. SAE had a closed party that barred non-guest list males from entering until 1am. In comparison, Kappa Alpha did not let any males in that were not on the guest list. Kappa Alpha and SAE's policy was found to be very similar for closed parties. Sigma Chi and AEPi both had open parties that allowed all undergraduate students to enter.

## CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, women can go to Kappa Alpha's fraternity parties regardless of race. For men, you must get to know Kappa Alpha individuals in order to gain entrance. Kappa Alpha Order's enforcement of the Alcohol Policy is no more different than other IFC fraternities. If one is going to comment on Kappa Alpha's enforcement of the alcohol Policy, one must address the IFC Alcohol Policy as a whole.

## EDITORIAL COMMENTARY:

Versus found that the IFC Alcohol Policy, in its present state, is possibly flawed. The Alcohol Policy, which mandates guest lists before each event, does not limit liability. It only discriminates against males that do not know any members of a given fraternity and creates yet another hindrance to a student's ability to socialize in a fraternity setting. This study found that women could freely enter all fraternity parties without being on the guest list. The liability is in no way limited when roughly 3,000 undergraduate women on this campus can freely enter without being on the guest list. Is the proper recourse to just limit the events to women that know brothers? By limiting females at the social events, it becomes even harder for fraternities to outreach to the greater campus. There are no clear answers, but the research Versus Magazine conducted establishes that there is an arbitrary enforcement of the guest list policy. The arbitrary enforcement of the guest list policy could have the potential to discriminate against individuals, although there was no racial discrimination found in this study.

The real issues at hand are the general goals of a fraternity party, the validity of the guest list policy for limiting liability and Kappa Alpha's ability to reach out other parts of the community. With the prevalence of minority fraternities, truly diverse populations at a given fraternity party would be challenging if not impossible feat to attain. The results of this research are a great example of how social groups tend to stick with their own homogeneous friends. Although Versus found absolutely no basis for racial discrimination in this study, there certainly is room to improve. Kappa Alpha and other fraternities have limited access to their parties through their guest list. The guest lists have the potential to serve as barriers to certain races. Only through involvement with the greater Vanderbilt community and campus minority groups will fraternities be able to invite a diverse crowd to their parties and rid themselves of the stigmas that serve as a breeding ground for gossip and rumors.

## Who Got In?

Weekend 1		
	Male (all race groups)	Female (all race groups)
SAE	NO	YES
KA	NO*	YES
ΣΧ	YES	YES

Weekend 2		
	Male (all race groups)	Female (all race groups)
AETI	YES	YES
KA	NO*	YES
ΣΧ	YES	YES

\*One male gained entrance, but not the whole.

## Office of Greek Life

Director of Greek Life:  
Kristen Torrey

The Office of Greek Life does not dictate who can and can't come to fraternity parties. It is up to the discretion of each fraternity house. The Vanderbilt chapters receive guidance from its national organizations.

Fraternity parties are closed in order to control liability. Actually, fraternities with guest lists match more with the desires of the national organizations.

Guest lists at fraternity parties are all about liability and, at least at Vanderbilt, not about selectivity.

## Interfraternity Council

President Matthew Meiners

IFC President, Matthew Meiners, explains the guest list policy:

> The guest lists and concerns over liability have restricted access to fraternity parties. Does IFC see this as a problem or a necessary sacrifice?

The ability to limit those that enter a fraternity party is in the best interests of each chapter. They shouldn't feel obligated to permit someone to enter their house that they do not want there.

> Are all undergraduate females on the guest lists of each party?

The guest lists are compiled at the discretion of each fraternity.

> What is an Open Party? What is a Closed Party? Are these terms accurate? How does one know the difference?

Technically speaking, an open party would be a party that is open to everyone- including non-students.

Both Vanderbilt and every national fraternity on our campus does not allow this kind of open party. A closed party is one that limits those allowed to enter with a guest list. On most nights, fraternities choose to have a closed party with a substantial guest list. There are particular nights when fraternities will limit the guests to only brothers and their dates. This would be the most exclusive type of party.

> The IFC Alcohol Policy states that there must be a guest list prior to an event. At a "closed" party, if one is not on the guest list, is it possible to gain entry? If not, is this a liability issue?

The guest list is compiled and edited at the discretion of the chapter.

# Freely Speaking

by Laura Breslin

*Versus sat down with Michael Wilt, a junior in the college of Arts and Science, to give him a chance to “speak freely.” As a weekly columnist for the Vanderbilt Hustler last year, Wilt gained notoriety for his views, particularly his political statements. People wanted to know, “Is Wilt a pragmatic conservative or a right-wing radical?” Versus wanted to give him an opportunity to explain his stances and let our readers decide for themselves.*

## Why write?

I write because I have so much on my mind, I want to get it out, and I hope people can learn something from it. With the *Vanderbilt Hustler* especially, my whole point was to write something to get people talking. Every week I would look at the news and think, “What is the most interesting thing I can write?” If it is controversial, then it’s controversial and people are going to talk about it. People don’t read things that aren’t interesting or aren’t controversial. For the *Hustler*, we need people to read the whole *Hustler*, and if they are not reading it, and they are just doing the crossword, then we have failed. The goal is to get readership up. Why? Because companies want to put their ads in our paper. And if we have 10,000 people reading, that means they are going to have a higher profit and they are going to invest more in our paper. If we only have 5,000, that sucks ... they are not going to want to advertise with us.

*Did you receive any hate mail?*

Actually I have never had any hate mail, just people writing to the *Hustler*, on both sides, in support and in opposition.

*Are you going to run for Editor-In-Chief of the Vanderbilt Hustler in December?*

Yes, I intend to apply to be the editor of the *Hustler* for the spring semester.

## Abortion

*Wilt generated much debate with his views on abortion; Versus was determined to delve deeper.*

I am not actually all that extreme when it comes to abortion; I just thought that it was an issue that needs to be discussed. People tend to shy away from it because it’s the third rail that you can’t talk about, but that doesn’t mean it isn’t an important issue. I am pro-life in almost all instances; I don’t ever really support the death penalty. As much as I would like to see *Roe vs. Wade* overturned and would love for all abortions to end, I realize that it is not likely to happen, so instead of being opposed to abortion, I actually would like to see adoptions increase, which help people and is pro-active.

*What about pregnancies resulting from rape and incest?*

My ethical views would say that it’s not fair to kill another human being. I believe life begins at conception. It is not fair to take it out on them (the unborn baby), to kill them, because of another human being’s mistake or crime.

*Birth Control?*

How could anyone not support abortion and yet not support contraception? If you want to prevent abortions, you should support contraception. Now, I am Catholic, but I disagree with the Church. Contraception is absolute necessity in the era of STDs, HIV, and abortion.

## Homosexuality and Gay Marriage

*Homosexuality?*

People can do what ever they choose and the government has no right to interfere in anyone’s business when it comes to the bedroom.

*Sodomy laws?*

They were blatantly unconstitutional; the Supreme Court overturned them in *Lawrence vs. Texas*.

*Gay Marriage?*

I don’t think that the government has any right to sanction marriage period. We should hand out civil unions and let churches decide marriage. If churches decide to only to marry men and women, then that is marrying in the eyes of God, but when it comes to government, absolutely they should provide the same rights for homosexuals as heterosexuals as far as civil unions go.

## Hilary in 2008?

I think anyone can beat Hilary.

## On George Bush

I think Bush was the right leader for the right time. I do think times are changing, and obviously in the second term people are starting to get anxious for a new president – even I am. I love the guy personally; I think he is a great guy and I wouldn’t mind sitting down and having a beer with him when I am of age (Versus note: President Bush does not drink alcohol). As far as his policies go, I don’t agree with him all of the time, but the fact of the matter is, I agree with him the majority of the time.

*Why write such dogmatic republican opinion pieces? Is it an issue of trying to get readership, or is it something you genuinely care about?*

Well, it’s both. For sure they are Republican views, but they are my views, and I just happen to believe in them. It’s not like I get a memo from the Republican National Committee that says “Write this article, these are the points you need to put in it.” I just happen to agree with the Republican Party in the columns that I write.

Certainly there were policies pre-9/11 that had an impact on them



attacking us, but that doesn't mean that they were the wrong policies, it just means that the terrorists were, well, evil.

*What is evil? Is it a black and white issue, or are there grey areas?*

Killing innocent people would definitely be evil. When it comes to terrorism, it is usually black and white, unless it happens to be, for instance, in Iraq, where you have people there—insurgents—who are attacking our troops because they don't want them there. It is actual Iraqis that are trying to get people out of their country.

*You don't see that as a pure evil?*

I see it as evil from the perspective of trying to kill people, but I don't see it as evil because they, the Iraqis, are soldiers and that part of the role of being a soldier is fighting; they are fighting an occupying force in Iraq.

### The question of “are we really at war?” in Iraq

The people elected leaders who made the decision to go to war for them, so does that make it right? Well, that is a moral judgment that every person has to make, but I think in the instance of the Iraq war, we were right to go in from a “just war” perspective. I am not saying Iraq attacked us, because clearly they did not attack us, but there were a lot of justifications for going in, and Saddam was an evil man. We didn't declare war on Iraq; we were going after the leadership in Iraq. Once we got that, it became our obligation to install new leadership, which we are somewhat in the process of doing.

However, I think that it is time to get out, to start phasing out, to start making it more the responsibility of the world, of NATO and the UN. Yes, the US did attack Iraq and we did have an obligation, but we got rid of the leadership. We made sure there were no WMDs, since there were none, and we put in a new leadership that was democratically-elected. We have been basically a police-force there since January 30<sup>th</sup>, and as long as the government there wants us there, I guess that is okay, but I think it is definitely time to start focusing again on the fact that we have a lot of problems at home.

### On Wilt's favorite topic, terrorism

Terrorists have definitely found a new home in Iraq, which is very ironic. Even though the justification was that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, and we were going to liberate the people of Iraq, I don't think we really made a connection with how Iraq would impact terrorism. I think the aftermath of the war is what we never

planned for—or planed wrongly for. That is not to blame President Bush for it, but to blame everyone in the administration. I think they would even blame themselves, but definitely terrorists in Iraq have increased since we went in.

Fundamentalist doesn't mean anything; it just means you adhere strictly to your religion. There are plenty of Muslims who adhere

strictly to their religion. Islam is a religion of peace, and there is no reason we should go after Islam. However, clearly, the majority of the terrorists that we are dealing with are Muslim, and we have to realize that. When it comes to Iraqi terrorists, the issue is more, “You are in my land, I want you out,” if you are an Iraqi. However, Al-Qaeda has sent people into Iraq to attack US soldiers. Al-Qaeda's need to kill people perverts their own religion, Islam. Islam is not responsible for terrorism. When it comes to Iran, I think we made a terrible mistake in the early '80s in opposing Iran, because they are not harmful as a country like Saudi Arabia. The Wahhabis want to kill us, and the Shi'a want us to leave them the hell alone.

I wish that we had a better Arabic program here. I mean, seriously, the Middle East and Islam are the most important things that we should be discussing, and Vanderbilt should be getting on the ball, offering courses about them. When it comes to the Middle East, I am really informed. I hate when people are like, “Muslims are terrorists.” Well no, Muslims are not terrorists, it just happens that a lot

of terrorists are Muslims. I would never associate Islam with terrorism directly. Islam is such a complex religion and is so important; that is why I am so interested in it and why it is my area of foreign policy.

### What it all comes down to

Generally I stick with my beliefs, whether people agree with them or not.



photo by Adam Setren

*Michael Wilt is double majoring in Philosophy and Political Science in the College of Arts and Science. For more information about Michael Wilt, visit his website:*

[www.michaelwilt.com/blog](http://www.michaelwilt.com/blog)

# THE GAZA WITHDRAWAL

Past, Present, and Future →

by Christopher McGready

Amidst a storm of celebration, protest, goodwill, and distrust over the recent Israeli withdrawal of settlements and military presence from the Gaza strip, a Palestinian boy hopes to one day become a pilot. Dreaming and high hopes are no longer out of the question for 12-year-old Hasham.

“I dream of becoming a pilot. I want to fly over the West Bank, over Egypt. I want to see other skies.”[1]

His sentiments come days after Israel completed its historic withdrawal of approximately 9000 settlers from 22 Jewish settlements in Gaza and another four in the West Bank. Officially termed Israel’s “Unilateral Disengagement Plan,”[2] the Gaza withdrawal was proposed by Prime Minister of Israel Ariel Sharon with the hopes of improving Israel’s national security and as a goodwill gesture toward the Palestinian Authority (PA).

Israel came into possession of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and a large part of the Golan Heights after the 1967 Six-Day War in which Israel launched a pre-emptive strike on June 5, 1967 against massing Egyptian forces in the Sinai Peninsula. Israel also launched a counterstrike against attacking Jordanian forces in the West Bank, and an attack against entrenched Syrian forces in the Golan Heights. By the time a cease-fire was signed on June 11<sup>th</sup>, Israel had tripled in size, capturing the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt (Gaza was an Egyptian protectorate, but considered part of Palestine). It had also acquired the Golan Heights from Syria, and the West Bank (controlled by Jordan but also considered Palestinian). As a ceasefire condition of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt, but annexed parts of the West Bank.

According to the CIA’s official website, Israel’s political borders remain the pre-1967 borders while the other regions are listed as “Israeli-occupied”; the ultimate fate of the West Bank and Gaza are considered final status issues and are subject to “further negotiation.”[3] The borders of the official Israeli state map includes Gaza, the West Bank as far west as the Jordan River and the Dead Sea all the way south to the Gulf of Ellat, and well into the Golan Heights in the north near the Sea of Galilee.

## Border Control and the Palestinian Economy

One of the biggest questions that remains about the Gaza withdrawal is the issue of border control and crossings, still in virtual lockdown by the IDF, particularly the border with Egypt. The Rafah border crossing is a perfect example of Israeli security measures. Before its recent closure for renovation, approximately 1,000 Palestinians arrived daily at the Rafah crossing, but only about 600 actually crossed. They underwent countless security checks and waited many hours, possibly days, just to pass through the checkpoints.

Settlement outside of Jerusalem



“I live in Jabaliyya which is only 45 kilometers away, but it has taken me 24 hours since leaving my home,” said Naim Mohammad. “The European officials who congratulate Israel for its withdrawal from Gaza should come here and see that there is no reason to celebrate.”[4]

Because of arms smuggling, Israel has demanded the right to inspect goods entering Gaza from Egypt, while the Palestinians have simultaneously demanded that people be able to move freely across Rafah into Egypt. This continued border control counteracts Israel’s promised military withdrawal; however, Israel has proposed a trilateral crossing at the junction of Gaza, Egypt, and Israel, which is thus far rejected by the PA.

One issue after the withdrawal, which also deals with the question of border control, is that of the Palestinian economy. To maintain the current level of unemployment, estimated to be between 30-60 percent, an additional 250,000 jobs will need to be created by 2010. An increase in joblessness will inevitably lead to an increase in poverty, which affects between 60 and 80 percent of Palestinians in Gaza (according to the World Bank, poverty is defined as living on less than \$2.10 a day). Additionally, Israel still maintains control over airspace and sea-lanes around Gaza, which will make the move for independence from Israel in an economic sense even harder.

## Israeli Politics

Many in Sharon’s right-wing Likud party disapprove of the withdrawal, most notably his chief rival and most vocal critic, former Finance Minister and 9<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu opposes the withdrawal on the grounds that it will hinder—not help—Israel’s ability to deal with a potential rise in terrorism.

“I don’t know when terrorism will erupt in full force – my hope is that it won’t ever,” said Netanyahu. “But I am convinced today that the disengagement will eventually aggravate terrorism instead



of reducing it. The security establishment also expects an increase in terrorism. The withdrawal endangers Israel's security, divides its people and sets the standards of the withdrawal to the '67 border." [5]

Netanyahu has recently been campaigning for Sharon's ouster as leader of the Likud. He claims that Sharon, "...has abandoned the way of Likud, and chosen another way, the way of the left." [6] According to Israeli news media, this is the first time members of the party have sought to unseat their leader, something made even more unusual as Likud is in power with a majority of seats in Parliament, control over the Prime Ministry, and a coalition alliance with the left-wing Labor Party.

Likud began the process of possibly ousting Sharon when the party's court ruled to allow a vote of the Likud Central Committee on September 26<sup>th</sup> on a proposal to advance the party's leadership primaries. Should the proposal pass, as polls predict it will, the primaries will take place in late November, within 60 days of the committee's final vote, forcing Sharon to decide his political future a little early. Netanyahu was leading in polls of Likud members but his support has been slipping as of late.

If Sharon does not run or if he loses against Netanyahu, he could quit the Likud Party and join another, taking supporters with him and endangering Likud's prospects for retaining control of the Prime Ministry. Sharon losing the leadership of the Likud would, in effect, virtually guarantee the collapse of his coalition government, in which case national elections would be held within three months. However, in a recent Haaretz-Dialog poll of Likud members, 53.6 percent said that Netanyahu winning and Sharon splitting off to form an independent party or joining an existing party would increase the chance of the Likud losing political power. Only 27.5 percent thought it would decrease those chances, 17.4 percent said they didn't know, and 1.5 percent refused to respond.

According to direct mail received by Likud members from Netanyahu, Sharon is trying to weaken Likud to help Vice Premier Shimon Peres, leader of the Labor Party, get elected as Prime Minister, though experts see this as unlikely for a couple of reasons:

Sharon will not necessarily lose the primaries to Netanyahu. And as the Haaretz-Dialog poll shows, most think Sharon losing is what would weaken Likud, not the other way around. However, were Netanyahu to win, Sharon's next move would most likely be to the left-leaning Labor Party, in which his strong sense of leadership and open convictions would be a welcome addition to this

"party without a leader." Furthermore, some experts actually see this as advantageous: the best elements of the right and the best elements of the left, combined with the fact that Peres has already been Prime Minister twice, from 1984-1986 (as part of a Likud-Labor coalition government in which the Prime Ministry rotated every two years) and again in 1995 following the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. Ironically, it was after Peres' second term ended in 1996 that Netanyahu's term as Prime Minister began, from 1996-1999.

## A Tragic Future?

Since the beginning of the Al-Aqsa Intifada (intifada is Arabic for "uprising") in September 2000, the Second Intifada has claimed hundreds of lives on both sides. The Palestine Red Crescent Society reports that 3668 Palestinians have been killed between September 30, 2000 and September 5, 2005, and the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) statistics report that 1064 Israelis have been killed between September 29, 2000 and August 29, 2005.

Alan M. Dershowitz, a Harvard law professor, wrote an editorial article for the Chicago Tribune on September 9, 2005, a portion of which is quoted here:

"The writer and philosopher Amos Oz does not expect old enemies 'to fall in love' with each other. 'Let's not be sentimental.' He sees the conflict as a 'tragedy in the exact sense of the word' – a 'collision between one very powerful claim and another no less powerful.' Employing a literary analogy, he believes that tragedies 'can be resolved in one of two ways: There is the Shakespearean resolution, and there is the Chekhovian one. At the end of the Shakespearean tragedy, the stage is strewn with dead bodies and maybe

there's some justice hovering high above. A Chekhov tragedy, on the other hand, ends with everybody disillusioned, embittered, heartbroken, disappointed, absolutely shattered, but still alive. And I want a Chekhovian resolution and not a Shakespearean one for the Israeli-Palestinian tragedy.'

"A Chekhovian compromise is the only true road to peace.

"Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas seem to understand this. The opponents of peace must not be allowed to stand in the way of compromise in this promising season of potential peace." [7]

This article is an edited part of a longer version. To read it in its entirety, please visit [www.versusmag.org](http://www.versusmag.org)

Checkpoint outside of Jerusalem



**Sources:** The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune, Ha'aretz (Israel), The Jerusalem Post (Israel), The Daily Star (Lebanon), ynetnews.com, Asharq Al Awsat (U.A.E.), Wikipedia.org, CIA World Factbook, and the World Bank

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- [7] – Chicago Tribune, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005. "This time, peace may be real thing" by Alan M. Dershowitz

# Quitting

[through meditation]

photo by Alex Makowski

by Aaron Malone

## Quitting Smoking Through Meditation

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that smoking is responsible for 440,000 deaths each year in the United States. Recently, the premature death due to lung cancer of news anchor Peter Jennings, a former smoker, provided the nation another vivid reminder of the dangers of smoking. Despite the obvious health risks, it is estimated that 46 million people in the United States still smoke. One of the reasons this number is so high is that cigarette smoking is a very difficult habit to break. Nicotine, the chemical in cigarettes that gives the smoker a “high,” is an addictive substance more powerful than many drugs. Because of the difficulty of quitting and the painful withdrawal associated with the popular “cold turkey” method, in which the smoker simply stops smoking, many smokers are seeking alternatives such as hypnosis and aversion therapy. Meditation, in particular, is growing in popularity as yet another option available to those who wish to quit smoking.

Meditation is the act of completely concentrating on a particular object or concept. Although practiced for thousands of years in the Buddhist and Hindu religious traditions, every major religion has some form of meditative customs. Meditation is often associated with spirituality, but it is also practiced secularly as a method of relaxation and stress relief. For those who wish to quit smoking, meditation has several benefits. It offers the smoker a way to directly confront the cravings associated with withdrawal without avoiding them or giving in to them. Secondly, it is a mindful approach in which the smoker breaks the habit of smoking by fully experiencing the actual act of smoking.

The meditative traditions teach that addictive habits must be removed through conscious, focused awareness of the addiction

**The first meditation** for dealing with smoking can be called the “smoking meditation.” In this meditation, the smoker takes smoking out of its usual, automatic, and unconscious context and focuses instead on being aware of the act of smoking and the bodily sensations produced by smoking. Here are some directions on how to perform the “smoking meditation”:

1. When you feel like you want a cigarette, pay attention to how that feeling manifests itself in your body. Where do you feel the craving?
2. Be mindful of the other feelings in your body. Does the rest of your body want the cigarette? You may find that the feelings in your body indicate an aversion to smoking, rather than a desire.
3. If you decide that you want to have a cigarette, go ahead. It is important to not go about smoking in the usual way. You can smoke, but go somewhere other than the place where you normally smoke. It should be a place where you can focus all of your attention just on smoking. There should be no distractions.
4. Take out a cigarette and light it up, but try to do this with as much awareness as possible. Pay attention to the feel of the cigarette in your hand as you light up.
5. As you smoke, be aware of any sensations caused by the cigarette.
6. Notice how smoking changes the way your body feels. Scan your body for any change in feeling and be aware of the various sensations you encounter. Do not judge or label the feelings as pleasant or unpleasant. The goal of this exercise is non-judgmental awareness of the sensations.
7. Maintain awareness of your bodily sensations until you are done with the cigarette. Remain focused on the act of smoking and the accompanying sensations. Do not talk on the phone, read, watch TV, or otherwise distract yourself.
8. When you are done with the cigarette, maintain awareness of your body. Note how the sensations in your body change now that you have finished.



**Mindful meditation** offers an alternative approach in which the smoker directly confronts the craving with non-judgmental awareness. The “craving meditation” teaches the smoker how to deal with the symptoms of withdrawal. Here are some directions on how to meditate on cravings:

1. When you get a craving, avoid immediately judging the sensation as good or bad. The most important part of the “craving meditation” is non-judgmental awareness.
2. Allow yourself a few moments to focus only on the craving. Do not attempt to distract yourself. Experience the craving fully. Do not do anything except feel the craving.
3. Close your eyes and be aware of your bodily sensations. Scan your body to feel where the craving affects you.
4. Find one spot in your body where the craving manifests itself especially strongly. Focus your attention on that sensation.
5. Remember to not judge your sensations. They are not good or bad; they are just sensations. The meditative traditions teach that when we start to put labels on things, such as “unpleasant sensation,” we stop seeing them for what they are. Do not judge.
6. Inevitably, your mind will begin to formulate ideas concerning the sensations you feel. When you find you have been caught up in the formulation of ideas about your experience, simply return your attention to your physical sensations.
7. Try to see the physical sensations for what they are without confusing them with the formulations of your mind. If a sensation causes a particular feeling or thought, simply note the occurrence and return to the sensation.
8. The strongest sensation may not remain in the same place throughout your meditation. After the sensation on which you were focusing diminishes, you may move on to another strong sensation.

Cravings do not last forever. Once the craving has passed, congratulate yourself, for you have successfully confronted the craving without giving in. You have seen the craving for what it is.



and of its associated bodily sensations. Awareness, it is taught, can free one from the entanglement of addiction. For this reason, the meditations for dealing with any addictions—nicotine, alcohol, and other drugs—emphasize complete awareness of bodily sensations. Generally, these meditations fall into two categories: those that focus on the sensations of craving, and those that focus on the sensations of indulging in the particular addictive habit.

### Smoking Meditation

By the time a smoker realizes that he or she should quit, smoking has, in most cases, already become a deeply ingrained and largely unconscious habit. These smokers light up, out of habit, at certain cues, such as talking on the phone, turning on the television, or driving in their vehicle. The daily pattern of smoking is then as much a part of the addiction as the nicotine is. In order to break the mold, meditative traditions teach that the addictive habit—in this case, smoking—must be dissociated from its normal cues. The act of smoking must be taken out of its usual context and replaced in an environment of awareness. According to Ayurveda, the Hindu science of health and medicine, full awareness of one’s bodily sensations will automatically and spontaneously cause the cravings and the desire for the addictive substance to fade. This is the basis of using meditation to treat addiction.

The purpose of the smoking meditation is to be fully aware of the act of smoking and how it changes the way the body feels. This awareness and concentration has two important benefits. In the short term, you will be more satisfied with the cigarette and,

therefore, less likely to light up again soon. Over time, however, your desire for cigarettes will, according the meditative traditions, spontaneously diminish as you come to know the habit fully.

### Craving Meditation

It is possible to give up smoking using only the smoking meditation described above. It has immediate benefits, though the whole process may take a period of weeks. Some people have quit using only that method, though there is another meditation which smokers trying to quit may find helpful. It is a method of dealing with the cravings that are associated with withdrawal. It can be called the “craving meditation.”

Smokers trying to quit usually face unpleasant, sometimes painful cravings. Normally, there are a limited number of ways of dealing with these cravings. The smoker may distract him or herself by getting involved in something else. The smoker may try to dissociate the craving from smoking by creating a new, healthy habit, such as drinking a glass of water. What is not apparent is that these methods are only ways of avoiding the craving, and are not methods of actually dealing with it.

While the “craving meditation” is definitely a challenge, the potential rewards warrant exploration. Confronting the craving allows the smoker to see that the craving is just a set of sensations, and not some powerful force that cannot be overcome. Confronting the craving gives the smoker confidence to overcome the next craving, until the habit is completely broken.



# A LONDON ADVENTURE:

## Desperately Seeking Albion

by Zach Norton

Hello, my name is Zach and I am an Anglophile. That is to say, I admire nearly all facets of British, Anglo-Saxon culture, popular or otherwise. After getting hooked on authors like C.S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, George Orwell, Neil Gaiman, Terry Pratchett, Charles Dickens, and William Shakespeare as a teenager, I found myself jonesing for harder doses of Britannia. I started slow with episodes of “Monty Python’s Flying Circus”, “Doctor Who”, “Spaced”, and soon worked myself into a frenzy with Hammer horror films and Royal Shakespeare Company performances. My family’s seasonal visits to the U.K. made matters worse by cementing my obsession and instilling wanderlust in me to boot. My fixation on travel and British culture led me to pursue an English Literature degree at Vanderbilt. More importantly, it coerced me to sign up for this past summer’s Humanities in London program.

I landed in London two days early via British Airways and checked into a Marriott hotel on the edge of Hyde Park. The booming Live 8 concert just outside my window seemed an auspicious welcome as I planned my itinerary. I spent those first two days exploring London’s West End with neither anxiety nor hesitation, wandering aimlessly through a maze of alleys and side streets overshadowed by impressive Georgian architecture. Let my confusion serve as warning for all would-be London travelers – never explore the city without an accurate map and compass. I’m still surprised by how easily signs pointing towards Piccadilly Circus led me into Soho’s red light district.

In spite of all my confusion, I relished the freedom that my aimless tour of London granted me; the tight shackles of parental mandate, impending adulthood, and adolescent drama became hula-hoops while I myself started to feel like a potent mixture of Bacchus, Samothrace Nike, and Jack Kerouac; the whole of London was my oyster. But all it takes for an illusion to shatter is a little bit of chaos and I got my first big dose of pandemonium a little more than a week into the HIL classes. I can proudly say that I never feared for my life after the four suicide-bombs rattled London – Vanderbilt’s administration was capable and helpful throughout the crisis – but I *did* get queasy. My stomach churned whenever I thought of London’s reaction and of the scathing xenophobia that would inevitably possess every non-Muslim denizen.

I did not seriously consider leaving London until the second attempted bombing on Warren Street station, the preferred tube entrance of my HIL classmates and I. The botched attack had a profound effect on London’s civic psyche. Paranoia shot through the poorer boroughs of East and South London. Mosques received bomb threats and hoodlums murdered a teenage boy of color in cold blood. In those tense following weeks, I feared the curling of the stiff British upper-lip and the possibility of martial law more than I feared nail-

bombs and over-stuffed rucksacks.

The fury I witnessed on television and read about in newspapers forced me to dissect the obsession that brought me to London in the first place. I examined the residual coal-dust in my spittle and on my white shirts, then thought of the disease and decay apparent in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* and in almost all of Charles Dickens’ novels. The House of Parliament’s pending Guy Fawkes exhibit reminded me of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 and of bleak, Orwellian dystopias. This panicking, afflicted metropolis could *not* be the Arthurian Albion of my dreams. Fortunately, during my fifth week in London, I rediscovered my optimism in the bustle of the Camden Town Market.

Punkers, ravers, skaters, goths, and tourists flocked all around me. Immigrants of every nation, color, and creed walked shoulder-to-shoulder with shuffling neon-haired, leather-clad independents. All the while, I marveled at the relative harmony that persisted in this section of the multi-cultural metropolis. It was here among the hipsters, transvestites, and squawking vendors that I realized that London was a deformed colossus, a squirming organism thriving on the monetary output of legion human blood cells. Seven million legal citizens and however-many-million transients traversed its underground circulatory system every day and commuted between its numerous regional organs. The City was the pulsating, financial heart, Spitalfields and Southwark the guts, Whitehall and Westminster the brain and face, respectively, and the Thames the long, curving spine. It was like any other massive city. Like New York or Boston or Chicago, it belonged to no one, not even to the nation in which it was situated. There was no way London could be my Albion, the fulfillment of my cultural obsession. It was its own.

After my train of thought had completed its stop, I grabbed a take-away curry from the Camden Lock and headed back to the nearest tube station. I took my seat on the rail with neither fear nor trepidation. As I stared at the myriad underground advertisements I knew that after this trip, I would not return to London for a long time. Nevertheless, I felt happy, for I knew that I would never stop chasing and probably never find Albion.



Each one of us is born naïve, youthful, and blind to the inequities and cruelty of the world. As lost young chicks, we scurry around in these first critical stages, trying to attach ourselves to a certain brood looking for a nurturing environment. In the process, our eagerness sometimes blinds us to who other people really are - as well as to who we have become.

# SIDES OF PEOPLE

My father told me, "If you are unsure of who someone really is, just look at the right side of their face. Their hidden self is shown there, and the person they want people to see is displayed on the other half. That way you'll always know who you are faced with."

Though I would not suggest that readers cover up half a person's face to get a real idea of who they are, I do propose that we question why it is that we have two selves, the part that is who we really are and the part that changes to accommodate those around us. Though most people are quite nice and normal under those thick veils that shield their true selves, we have to ask, "Why is our true personality shown so reluctantly?"

For many of us, it is our freshman year; we are in a strange new world, and may feel more like lonely chicks than we would care to admit. As we try to find our way in this new place, it is all too easy to dive in blindly and lose ourselves in the masses. What do we do to protect ourselves in cases like these? Well, we do the most natural thing in the world: we lose ourselves purposefully, under a heavy mask that obscures our identity. In our first meetings with people, we have so much to prove. We feel the need to somehow convey our entire identities within the first five minutes of conversation. Faced with that impossibly risky task and eager for others to accept us, many of us will most likely mold to the person we think our new classmates and friends want us to be.

Let's take that preppy girl with pearls and a cute skirt who lives just down the hall. She seems to have it all - confidence, looks, and a million friends. On first introduction,

she mentions that she thinks cross-stitching is lame. You happen to be someone who just cannot get enough of those "easy to make" kits. Well, not anymore. You are now willing to sacrifice your own hobby, something that has always been important to you, for the sake of what a girl down the hall thinks. You have now drawn a heavy veil across yourself, and once it is there, it is

difficult to remove. Little do you know that the Pearl Girl herself was a master knitter until she sacrificed her own identity. It's a vicious cycle. So you create an outer layer for people to view, and keep your inner to yourself, hoping it is not discovered. We do this to help ourselves by creating a defense mechanism to avoid getting hurt in unfamiliar territory. However, by creating this exterior persona we have actually taken a knife and stabbed it into our own backs. New situations are a time for us to explore and reach out, but they are not an excuse for us to forget who we have been for the past two decades of our lives. There is no need for a Jekyll and a Hyde; choose your poison and pick one. Masks are for actors; they are heavy burdens for the rest of us. We will always be like following chicks unless we allow ourselves to proudly wear the masks we were born with. Yet how can we tell who to like and who to avoid? It would be horrible to judge on first

appearances, since we now know of those deceptive masks.

If you are not willing to accept my father's superstitious methods, then I have no better alternative to offer. Until people are able to show their true selves, our decisions are mostly left up to chance. Never be quick to judge, though; relationships are too easy to break, and much more difficult to form. Our masks have made them more difficult, but we must look through those heavy veils; only time and effort will let us see what we have been missing.



photo by Alex Makowski

by Elizabeth Claydon

# “FLOOD IS THE FUTURE”

photo by Jeff Ewers

