

# TUFTS OBSERVER

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**Guest Goes**

**Green**

**Bacow Boosts**

**Brand**



**guster**

KEEP IT TOGETHER



Artwork by Sarah I. Moshontz De La Rocha



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# On the Road of Life

BY MICHAEL SKOCAY



**T**he only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding across the stars.

These are the words of Sal Paradise as he describes his companions in the 1957 novel *On the Road*. The thoughts reflect those of the author, Jack Kerouac, the famous godfather of the Beats, and a godfather to every modern writer, every traveler without a destination, and every individual trying to find meaning, compassion, inspiration, and adventure in life.

Kerouac and other leaders of the Beat Generation—among them Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, Neal Cassady—spent their youth in a Cold War-era America where conformity was the law of the land and dissent was forced to the subterranean levels of society. The group of friends, lovers, and misfits who found solidarity in their eccentricity was a collection of drug dealers, small-time thieves, Benzedrine and morphine addicts, homosexuals, Jews, and struggling writers. Their apartment on 115th Street in New York City was alive with activity day and night. The constant clicking of a typewriter and the boisterous

cacophony of animated, all-night-Benzedrine-induced discussions filled the apartment until its occupants spilled out onto the street for a late-night trip to a jazz club, a bar, or just a long walk through the desolate city streets. Yes, this was not a healthy life nor was it a safe one; but it was a life filled with passion—with love, with drunkenness, with spiritual epiphanies of thought ... and it is exactly the life I want. These are the people I want to know.

Rather unfortunately I was born in the mid-eighties after many of the Beats had died and when their subculture was already a commodified ghost of its once vibrant self. The popularity of glam-rock musicians, a succession of teen romance films starring the “brat pack,” and the rest of the materialist-inspired eighties did nothing for the creation of a new subculture. The rise of grunge music and dress in the early nineties was a viable subculture that arose from an infatuation with both punk rock and the hippies. Soon though, grunge too entered the popular lexicon, and either way I was too young and lost in the suburbs to have experienced a great sense of the beatness

Here, of all places, there must be people who read *Dharma Bums* and *Naked Lunch*, who stay up late discussing the implications of the mind-blowing theories in *Waking Life*.

that of that cultural movement.

Throughout high school I searched for the interesting people, the eccentric ones who had a sense of beatness to them but I had no great luck in that search. Instead I found a sea of teenagers obsessed with popular culture and the latest trends, people who cared more for the newest pop album than the early blues music that had taken of my lyrical soul. After four years there, I expected to find a more interesting crowd in college but again the diversity of thought that I sought was few and far between. I finally found a friend who shared an interest in the beats but we both transferred and that was that. Now and then we write back and

forth by email but it hardly has the same spontaneous energy of a philosophical conversation or the excitement of listening to the Doors on vinyl.

So here am I today, a rising junior at Tufts and still without a niche. When I enrolled at Tufts as a transfer student this time last year, I was alive with excitement at the possibilities of meeting people in such a diverse school. Here, of all places, there must be people who read *Dharma Bums* and *Naked Lunch*, who stay up late discussing the implications of the mind-blowing theories in *Waking Life*, there must be people who love photography, people who walk around the city for the hell of it—for the kicks, for the sights, the sounds, the smells. And I’m sure there are and maybe I just haven’t done enough to find that minority of passionate individuals who would rather stay up all night discussing life and people and things and ... instead of sleeping. So far I’ve hardly found anybody who can recognize a Pollock—and maybe I’m just looking in the wrong places.

More than anything, I’m using this space to introduce myself to Tufts. To say

“hey” to all the writers, the dreams, the late-night nocturnalists, and to any and all of you who understand what I’m saying. And I hope there’s at least one of you out there who’s a Beat-lover, an art-lover, and a lover of anything done with passion. It seems that we’re few and far between in our generation. There are no hippies, no Beats, no “Lost Generation,” among us that I can perceive. And so I guess we’re all out there as individuals—those of us who want to carry on the tradition of opposing the mainstream.

If you’re one of the “mad ones,” one of the Beats, one the hippies, then I’d be glad to meet you. ☺



# POLICE BROTHER

**Wednesday, April 19**

At 3:45 p.m., there was a report of a larceny of University property from 4 Colby St. A professor had let students remain in a classroom to complete a project and returned later to find that a portable video projector was missing. The item is worth over \$1,500, and police are investigating the case.

At 9:00 p.m., there was a report of a suspicious male on Tesla Avenue. At an earlier date, a female student who was jogging reported being verbally harassed on the sidewalk by a young, Hispanic-looking male. The student reported the incident to the police only after finding the same man parked on the side of the road in a Jeep Grand Cherokee and watching her.

**Thursday, April 20**

At 4:20 p.m., the writer of the this column, as well as at least a hundred of other enthusiasts enjoyed mother nature's gift on the library roof. Moments later he and many others were seen floating to Chi Omega to purchase baked goods.

**Saturday, April 22**

At 12:00 a.m., there was a report of disorderly conduct in Cousen's Gym. An officer patrolling the all-night event in Gantcher heard singing coming from the pool area, which was off-limits. The officer found a group of male students drinking alcoholic beverages in the men's pool locker room. He ordered the students to clean up and leave, and they have been reported to the Dean of Students.

At 12:45 a.m., officers responded to complaints that students were throwing rocks at cars and pedestrians from a balcony in Lewis Hall, including an unmarked police vehicle. Officers caught two students fleeing the balcony when they approached. The students deny throwing rocks, and the case is still under investigation.

**Monday, April 24**

At 12:00 a.m., there was a report of a fight on Capen Street. Earlier that evening, residents had allowed a drunken acquaintance sleep on the couch in their living room. A resident woke up to find the man urinating in their kitchen sink. The altercation became physical when residents tried to kick the drunkard out of the house. The drunken student refused medical attention to treat a bloody nose.

—*Spencer Maxwell, with the cooperation of the TUPD*

## COLLEGE BULLETS

### Students Protest Juvenile's Wrongful Death

About 1500 students marched along side Jessie Jackson and Al Sharpton on April 23 in Tallahassee, Florida, to protest how the state has handled the suspicious death of a black teenager in a juvenile detention center. The young man had died a day after guards had kicked and dragged him on the floor, an incident which was caught on tape. Police say that the cause of death is a complication resulting from sickle cell trait. However, the protesters dispute the autopsy findings.

### Harvard Student's Novel Hints of Plagiarism

Kaavya Viswanathan, a sophomore at Harvard University has published a book "How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life" for a handsome sum of money. However, the Harvard student newspaper on Sunday, April 25 cited seven passages that very closely resemble passages of a novel by Megan McCafferty, one of Kaavya's favorite authors. Kaavya has agreed to remove the questionable passages in future editions of the book.

—*Compiled by Spencer Maxwell*

## Just the Facts

A newborn kangaroo is about one inch in length.

—[SOME-GUY.COM/FACTS.HTML](http://SOME-GUY.COM/FACTS.HTML)



# Bacow Boosts Brand

BY MICHAEL SKOCAY  
AND LYDIA HALL

There probably isn't a single person in the Tufts community who would disagree with the fact that this year has been an eventful one for the school. No one seemed to believe this more than President Lawrence Bacow, who took the time to sit down with the *Observer* to discuss the new "re-branding" of the school, the perceived "liberal bias" on college campuses, and his *jumbo* collection of school memorabilia.

Q: What do you think was the greatest moment of this school year?

A: Clearly the Omidyar deal . . . but there were others. I think that how the campus came together in the fall to embrace the students from Tulane [University], that was very moving. And then how that kept up over the course of the year—students going down to the Gulf region over Christmas vacation and a lot of other interactions. Those two things stand out to me.

Q: Conversely, what do you feel was the school's worst moment of the year?

A: I'm hard pressed to pick anything out . . . there are things which the larger student body never sees, personal tragedies that occur. We lost a number of faculty colleagues. Jim Smoltze died, for example. That was the most recent memorial services I've gone to. Jim was 52, had cancer, and went quickly. And when a young person dies like that, it's a profound loss for the community. Jim had been a member of the faculty for years and had deep ties. Things like that are very, very difficult.

Q: Why is Tufts exploring adopting a new seal?

A: I'll start with this; the official seal is not changing. The seal that appears on your diploma, that is used officially by the university is not changing. There are times in which representations of the seal are used for purposes of signage and other things and that has been simplified to make it easier to read, to print, and to graphically appear more boldly.

Q: Why does the university feel the need to update its image?

A: We think we were overusing the seal, the seal was appearing on the side of garbage trucks and this was not a terribly distinguished way to use the seal of the university. So we have decided to use the seal for official matters, but where we are just trying to identify the university, we are trying to be much clearer and bolder in terms of our visual identity, and also more consistent.

Q: Who is involved in the redesign process?

A: It was initiated at the encouragement of the board of trustees and the trustees,

who are almost all alumni, have enormous experience in issues of visual identity. One of the concerns that people have had for the university over the years is that we have not gotten the attention of the press nor the kind of publicity that we deserve. So there has been a concerted effort to try and change that. One of the observations that has been made by the trustees as well as consultants is that we have suffered because we have not had a consistent visual identity. If you were to go to the bookstore for example, you would see Tufts represented in probably twenty different ways. If you take a look at websites, publications, signage, the name is written in different ways all over the



AARON SCHUTZNEGEL



place. For most institutions of our stature, there is an agreed-upon, standardized visual identity system. Therefore, if you are going to say “Tufts,” it should appear one way, if you are going to say “Tufts University School of Medicine,” “School of Dental Medicine,” there must be a protocol for doing that. And so we are just getting with the times, doing what every other university has done but we have been slow to do—to articulate a consistent visual image. But the seal is the seal and when used in less official terms, it will be more graphically identifiable.

In addition, we did some research on the seal and interestingly, the seal that we have today is not as old as I am. The original seal had all these religious symbols in it and that changed in 1953. People tend to think that things were etched in stone but in fact they are always changing.

Are we going to have people stop doing something? Everybody’s biggest challenge is resources and three biggest are money, space, and time.

Q: What is the main area where Tufts can improve?

A: I think we get the important things right. Students get a great education when they come here, faculty take undergraduate education very seriously, it is a very collegial institution. We have done a better job at engaging our neighbors than we have in the past, we are doing a better job at telling our story, promoting the institution, a better job in engaging our alumni—which is very important for the future, and better at thinking about our stewardship of our physical resources. For instance, we completed a master planning effort for the campus this year, which is very important for thinking about the next two, three, four decades of

Q: Although Tufts is a school that prides itself on diversity, inside the school minorities seem to self-segregate along racial, ethnic, or other boundaries in a paradoxical way. How do you feel about this?

A: This is a longer conversation. First of all, I take issue with the statement that people don’t interact. Students interact in classes, on athletic teams, they interact on the Observer, on the Daily; there is lots of interaction. That’s the first point I would make is that the notion that campus is segregated is just wrong. Second, especially for minority groups, when students leave home they leave a support network and they seek to replace that when they come to campus. This is true of every group of students and every student. If you are a member of a minority group, prior to coming to Tufts you may have gone to a very diverse high school, but at night you still went home

“That’s not to say that we do not have interaction across groups or that students aren’t friends or don’t learn from each other, we have lots of interaction. People who share common experiences and common interests tend to cluster, that doesn’t necessarily mean that people don’t interact.”

Q: How much progress are we making toward the goal of need-blind admissions?

A: We have made substantial progress but we have a long ways to go. It is the most ambitious goal in the capital campaign and we will need to raise 200 million dollars in additional endowment. We are somewhere between a quarter and a third of the way there.

Q: What is the biggest, most continual challenge in leading Tufts University?

A: Every university president would answer that question in the same way. Everybody’s biggest challenge is resources. I don’t just mean money when I say resources; there’s money, there’s space, there’s time. Take time as a resource—time in the curriculum—people say we should be teaching this, we should be teaching that, and how are we going to do that in four years? It’s a time crunch. Or people will say, it would be great if faculty did the following; but there are 24 hours a day and seven days a week, how are we going to allocate that time?

the evolution of the university.

Q: What do you consider your greatest accomplishment as President of Tufts?

A: Presidents don’t accomplish anything on their own. You accomplish things as a team. I guess I’m most proud of the people that we have brought to Tufts. The biggest challenge that I faced when I came here was replacing Sol Gittleman. Sol had been provost for 21 years and a legendary provost. And I’m very proud of recruiting Jamshed Bharucha as our provost. I think he has done a brilliant job and Jamshed in turn has helped me to recruit a terrific set of deans. The deans now are a very diverse group, maybe one of the most diverse group of school deans in the country. A majority of our schools are either headed by woman or people of color. We have eight schools, four of them are headed by woman (one of them an African-American) and one of our provosts is Asian-American. So these are not only fabulous people, it is a very diverse group that I am proud of.

to your own. Thus it is not surprising that people try to replicate that. They are looking for a supportive network that feels comfortable. But that’s not to say that we do not have interaction across groups or that students aren’t friends or don’t learn from each other, we have lots of interaction. People who share common experiences and common interests tend to cluster, that doesn’t necessarily mean that people don’t interact in important ways.

Q: Do you feel that you connect enough with the student body, that people know you as a person?

A: Well, there is one of me and there are 9,000 students at Tufts—4,700 undergraduates but there also 4,300 graduate students on three different campuses. So, I am expected to be downtown at the medical school, the dental school, the school of nutrition, in Grafton at the veterinary school, as well as to be here [in Medford] amongst undergraduates and graduate students at the Fletcher School. It is difficult to get around.



But last night I was at South Hall at 8:00 in one of my meetings with students where I am invited into the dormitories. As you know, I just finished running the marathon and trained extensively with a group of students over the course of five months when we were out training for hours. Each year I have a group of advisees as well. We [Adele and I] live on campus, we go to theatrical performances, athletic performances, we go to musical performances. But I also have a job to do and I'm not the chief counselor and there is never any way I'm going to know a significant number of students.

Q: Recently in the news there has been talk about liberal bias on college campuses and some conservative student groups have taken issue to comments made by their professors. Do you think there is a political bias on the Tufts campus and if so, should this be corrected?

A: I think there is a diversity of opinion on the campus. However, we are in Massachusetts which differs politically from much of the rest of the nation and so it is not surprising if the campus differs as well and in many respects it reflects Massachusetts. We have made an effort to bring a variety of speakers to this campus which represent a number of views. We had Leon Cass here

who is head of the President's Council on Bioethics, Shelby Steele is coming in the fall, Larry Summers is going to speak in the spring, and we have had a variety of other speakers come to campus who represent a broad range of political views. Interest-

“I see the *Daily* more often but I probably read the *Observer* more consistently in the sense that it's rare that I actually miss an issue.”

ingly, two years ago when President Bush gave the Fares Lecture, I was accused by the faculty of only bringing conservative people to give the Fares Lecture. At some level, there are going to be different perspectives on this issue. One of the things which we should not do, we should not have a political test for admission or to teach or to be employed at this university in any dimension. So I don't think that we should be hiring faculty because they are liberal or because they are conservative nor should we be admitting students because of these distinctions.

Q: How about bias within the classroom?

A: I think that faculty when they teach, teach within their area of expertise. However, most students, when they come to Tufts, want to get to know their professors. They don't want distance. If you are going to get to know somebody, you will know them in multiple dimensions and that probably means that you are going to get to know their political views, so you cannot have it both ways. You can't say that I want to have a cup of coffee with a faculty member, really get to know them, and then say that I don't want a faculty member expressing anything other than what is in the class. That is pretension.

Q: What do you think is notable about the incoming Class of 2010?

A: The students that we have admitted are a remarkable bunch; academically accomplished, intellectually curious, engaged in a myriad of activities in the high school that they will continue doing once they are here. It doesn't seem possible, but each class seems to get ever more

accomplished.

Q: Can you give an update on the microfinance fund?

A: We have made our first few investments and we have given ourselves three years to invest all of the money. We are very happy

with our initial commitments and so far it is going pretty well.

Q: Do you read the campus publications?

A: I tend to pick them up when I can but my problem is that I am actually off-campus a lot. I travel a lot on behalf of the university, to engage alumni I have to go to where they are. I probably am away at least once every week on an airplane someplace and so I cannot read anything consistently. But I do read; in fact, I have a copy of the *Observer* on my desk.

Q: Do you prefer the *Observer* or the *Daily*?

A: There is more of the *Daily* than there is of the *Observer*, so I see the *Daily* more often but I probably read the *Observer* more consistently in the sense that it's rare that I actually miss an issue. Whereas with the *Daily*, I miss issues whenever I am gone.

Q: Is it true that you are trying to get the admissions office to start using a “talent-blind” admissions policy as it was reported in the April 1 issue of the *Observer*?

A: No, people give me credit for being involved in a lot more things than I am. That was funny issue. No, just talent-blind among the editorial board of the *Observer*.

Q: You recently donated a large number of Jumbo-related memorabilia to the Tufts Digital Collections and Archives. Are you tired of receiving Jumbo gifts?

A: As you might imagine, this office gets a lot of Jumbo-related gifts and there is only so much space to house them. So we recycle, we trade off—when new stuff comes in, old stuff goes off to the archives. I have received 48 elephant ties over the years, however, some of which have never seen the light of day. ☺



AARON SCHUTZNEGELE



# Tufts Hugs a Tree

BY LETICIA FRAZAO

The goal of ECO, or Tufts Environmental Consciousness Outreach, is to raise awareness in the Tufts community about environmental issues. Through programs and events such as last fall's "Do it in the Dark" campaign and this spring's Earthfest, ECO reaches out to students who perhaps would not otherwise be aware of the environmental issues that can affect them. "ECO acts as the students' voice for the Tufts Community to be environmentally conscious," explained Carrie Jones, co-chair of Earthfest. "We strive to make the campus aware of their actions on the environment and we try to educate the community on what each individual can do to lessen their own ecological footprint."

Beginning in 1970, Earth Day is held on April 22nd, to celebrate the Earth and to remind people of the changes that need to be made to the environment. Here at Tufts, Earth Day was the culmination of "Earthfest 2006: The Return of Captain Planet," a weeklong event for ECO causes. It was divided up into the five elements earth, wind, fire, and water, finally ending with heart, representing sustainability, on Earth Day. Earthfest was a week full of celebrations and activities, "trying to attract people who would not otherwise pay attention to environmental activities," said ECO member Liz Oo. There was tabling in the Campus Center, giving information about Pangea Fair Trade, why to vote for wind power on April 20th, why to go vegetarian, and a WaterWatch booth, among other causes. There was also a film screening of an interview with author and environmental activist Ross Gelbspan, made after Hurricane Katrina and explaining his opinions on climate control, fossil fuel, and the Bush administration. Additionally, students were entertained by a Fair Trade Acoustic Concert in Brown and Brew, as well as by Spelt Melk, a former ECO member's bluegrass band, which played on the Academic Quad. "We were visible with flyers and pinwheels and tabling, and Saturday's event on the quad got people to at least stop and think about Earth Day," said Amanda Fencel, co-chair of Earthfest.

Earthfest, according to the co-chairs,

was a success, though the turn out was less than the group had hoped for. With end-of-the-year assignments and poor weather, ECO believes, it was harder to attract people to the festivities. Despite this, many attendees were April Open House guests, which seems to show a growth in environmental interest among future Tufts students.

When asked how much people in the Tufts community seem to care about these causes, Oo responded that she thinks a good number of students are environmentally conscious, but that she is unsure of how much they exercise this awareness. "Many people care but are unaware of what their small actions do (or don't do)," said Jones. "Showing you care is even more important than saying you care. I think the Tufts community needs to show it a little more." As seen through the wind referendum vote in favor of the use of wind power, though, people in the community do seem to be concerned with issues such as climate change. "Climate change is happening and Tufts is responding. That's partially what geared up the wind referendum idea two years ago," said Fencel.

There are little things that everyone can do to help save the environment, as the founders of Earth Day believed. In 1969, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson had the idea to create a day of environmental awareness on April 22nd. With the help of some fellow senators, as well as the inspiration of President Kennedy and his environmental conservation tour back in September of 1963, Senator Nelson sparked the curiosity of many Americans, and in 1970 the first Earth Day was a huge success, with 20 million demonstrators. If the idea of one person can spark a yearly worldwide celebration, then it seems that everyone can make a difference. "Keep in mind that little things like leaving the lights on, the water running, your computer on 24/7 do matter," said Fencel.

Jones agreed. "These are all things that students can do to create a change in their personal environmental impact," she says.

Oo continues with more suggestions: "It is healthier to eat [only] one serving of meat a day," she explains. "It takes a lot of water to make beef, and [cows] are high

up on the food chain, so a lot of environmentalists are vegetarians for environmental reasons rather than [just] being concerned for animals."

Along with the TCU Senate Presidential Election on April 20th, there was a vote for wind power, asking students if they favored the use of wind power at Tufts. Wind power is a clean alternative to the traditional way in which power is generated, which uses fossil fuels, whose burning causes global warming and other earth-harming effects. By voting in favor of wind power during elections, students showed support for this change in a power source. "ECO promoted this with pinwheels and tabling during Earthfest to help get the turnout up. The end result is that we have 74 percent of voters supporting Tufts buying wind power, an unlikely administrative purchase, which means ECO is going to come up with a creative solution next year to make this two year campaign to get wind power at Tufts a reality," says Fencel.

In addition to the attempt to purchase wind power, Tufts has been trying to become more environmentally friendly in other ways. The school has signed a new energy contract, so that it will be getting 80 percent hydropower and 20 percent natural gas from TransCanada through the New England Power Grid. There is, however, always the desire to do even more. Said Fencel, "We are interested in greening Tufts campus; past projects have pushed for Fair Trade coffee and tea in dining halls, departmental recycling, and 'green purchasing,' and energy and water conservation."

Also, Sophia Gordon Hall, the new upperclassmen dorm opening in the fall, is Tufts' first "green building." According to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), the building is energy-efficient, with solar panels to heat water and generate a small amount of electricity. The structure was also built out of construction materials that are almost entirely recycled. ECO member Oo, among others, was a supporter of the idea. However, there is still progress to be made, and everyone's help is needed. ☺

*To become more involved, attend an ECO meeting! They are held every Monday night at 9:30pm in Eaton Hall. Their website, [www.ase.tufts.edu/eco](http://www.ase.tufts.edu/eco) also has information and updates about events.*

# We've Come a Long Way: A Look Back at Tufts 2005-06

BY LYDIA HALL AND  
MICHAEL SKOCAY

Remember arriving on campus back in September (some for the first time ever)? Remember unpacking all of your things, arranging your room, buying all of your insanely expensive textbooks, and heading off to your first classes of the school year? And remember thinking that this was going to be a long year? Well, it's probably hard for some people to believe, but the school year is actually almost over—and in some people's cases, their Tufts careers are almost over for good. As second semester draws to a close, the Observer reminisces about some of the biggest happenings of 2005-2006 at Tufts.

## THE OMI DYAR GIFT

What would you do if you had \$100 million to spare? If you're Pierre or Pam Omidyar, you donate that sum to Tufts, making it the largest donation in the history of the university (the previous record having been held by the donor who gave \$50 million to the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine last year). The early November gift from the EBay founder and his wife was allocated not only for the school's endowment (which now stands at over \$1 billion), but for the creation of the Omidyar-Tufts Microfinance Fund, which, as President Bacow explained at the time, was formed with the purpose of "extending small loans to entrepreneurs in the developing world, designed to help and empower them to start businesses." After these small sums are repaid, the proceeds will go back to the school. Another important program that has been funded from the Omidyar donation has been the creation, along with the TCU Senate, of the internship stipend program, which is allowing students who might previously not have been able to accept unpaid summer internships to take them.

As of now, according to President Bacow, several investments have been made through the microfinance fund, although it is the University's policy not to disclose

where they were made or how much money was put in.

## SHAKEUPS IN THE SENATE

This year has seen several changes in membership of the TCU Senate. First, back in October, came the announcements that two senators, freshman Andrew Lee and senior Athena Bogis, were resigning, one due to a lack of time to fully devote to the job, and the other due to a leave of absence she was taking from the university. As a result, new elections were held to fill these seats, and new senators took their places.

Another big surprise from the Senate this year came earlier this semester when junior senator Ivan Nurminsky was forced by his fellow senators to give up his seat after not attending meetings. Another election was held, and junior Mitch Robinson, recently elected President of the Senate, was voted into Nurminsky's seat.

## AN OFFICER IS ASSAULTED

Last November 23rd, junior Ciaran O'Donovan, after being arrested for fighting with another student, assaulted a female, African-American TUPD officer who had been called to the scene. According to the report, O'Donovan, who was intoxicated, pulled the woman's hair, threw her to the ground, hit her, and used racial slurs against her. Besides being expelled from Tufts—a decision that he later attempted and failed to have overturned—he faced charges from the City of Somerville for disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and assault and battery on a police officer.

## A SEX OFFENDER IN THE DINING HALL

How would you feel if you found out that your meals were being prepared by an unregistered sex offender? That was the question that people found themselves asking early last December, when it was revealed that police had arrested a man who had been working in Carmichael, and, unbeknownst to everyone, had actually committed a Level Three sex crime, and was wanted for, after he moved, not having re-registered his name in the database that

the state keeps of such criminals. However, further information later came to light that the man was mentally disabled, and had found his job at Tufts through a group that helps mentally challenged people obtain employment. The man, however, lost his Carmichael job.

## IN MEMORIAM

Sadly, the Tufts community saw several unexpected losses among its members this year. Just before Thanksgiving Vacation, senior Boryana Damyanova was hit by two cars while crossing the street, dying almost instantly. Her fellow students were stunned by the sudden loss, and since her death, a memorial service was held in Goddard Chapel, and a fund was created in her name to bring speakers to Tufts to discuss corporate social responsibility, which was one of Damyanova's passions.

Another unexpected death was that of Professor Jim Weaver, who taught physics at the university for nearly 40 years. Despite having had a stroke two years ago, Weaver continued to teach, and his students spoke of an instructor who was extremely devoted.

Yet another faculty member who passed away this semester was Computer Science Professor Jim Schmolze, who died of complications from cancer in February. A separate memorial service for him was held in Goddard Chapel earlier this month so that his students and colleagues could celebrate his life.

Finally, this February, Nadia Medina, founder of the Academic Resource Center and the Writing Fellows program, as well as a former professor, died after a long illness. Colleagues remembered her for her creativity, and were working on establishing an award in her name.

## FINALLY, BETTER WIRELESS!

After months of pleas and demands from students, and work from Tufts OnLine in conjunction with the TCU Senate, it was announced that there would be outdoor wireless internet access in certain parts of campus, enabling students to do some of



their last-minute paper writing outside in the spring weather. This is part of an ongoing effort to improve computing at Tufts. In related news, earlier this year, several other changes were made to the webmail services, including doubling the quota for students' Tufts inboxes and filtering of junk e-mail (although I still get those e-mails offering me "hot stock tips...")

#### HURRICANE KATRINA, TULANE, GULF COAST TRIPS

Hurricane Katrina approached the Gulf Coast in late August as a category five hurricane with sustained winds of 175 mph. When the storm finally made landfall in coastal Louisiana in the early morning of August 29 it was a category three hurricane with powerful winds, drenching rains, and storm surges that breached that levees surrounding New Orleans. Katrina left a path of destruction in its wake. Upwards of 1,000 residents lost their lives, thousands of homes were destroyed, hundreds of thousands were evacuated from the region, and eight months after the disaster, much of Louisiana and Mississippi are still recovering from the storm without the aid of adequate federal funding or an effective distribution of resources.

The hurricane hit Louisiana two days before Tufts freshman arrived for orientation and new students watched helplessly to news reports of the destruction, and the anarchy and inhumanity of refugee life inside the Superdome. At the same time, new students were arriving in New Orleans with plans of an exciting year at Tulane University. Their plans were put on hold after the university closed indefinitely following a direct hit with the hurricane. Colleges and universities across the nation opened their doors and overbooked their classes to welcome displaced Tulane students. Eager to help with the dire situation, Tufts welcomed 40 students for a semester on the Medford campus and Jumbos were quick to embrace their temporary classmates. It was the return to their beloved campus in the Big Easy last January that finally brought a sense of closure and familiarity to Tulane students. One student, Jennifer Near, boasted "Everyone is happy to be back," she said. "It's unbelievable. So many people have been through so much."

Winter and spring break were the first chance for most Jumbos to have a

direct impact on the battered Gulf Coast region and dozens took the opportunity to spend their vacations volunteering with the recovery effort. Whether building new homes, recovering treasured belongings, or literally picking up the pieces of destroyed houses, Tufts undergraduates and grad students were glad to lend a hand to those in need. The pictures and the memories they brought back from the region evoke every emotion from heartbreak to hope to the beauty of human kindness. Sadly, even with the combined efforts of Tufts students and an army of volunteers, Louisiana and Mississippi still have work to complete and the lives lost due to the mistakes of federal agencies—including the residents who waited days on the roofs of their flooded homes for help that never arrived. At the very least, Tufts students and the university did their small part in improving the situation of fellow students and strangers alike.

#### HOUSING LOTTERY CHANGES

After a majority-vote in support of changes proposed by the TCU Senate, the housing lottery system received an update in November. The previous system called for random lottery numbers to be released each of a student's four undergraduate years. The new system works toward equalizing the process by giving students random numbers in freshman and junior year and reciprocal numbers in sophomore and senior year. In other words, if a student received the lowest lottery number in sophomore year, they would receive the highest number in senior year and vice versa. The new system begins with the class of 2009 and also calls for the release of sophomore, junior and senior lottery numbers at one time, rather than separately each year. The fall 2006 opening of Sophia Gordon Hall has also cleared space for rising juniors to live on campus—a class which is traditionally restricted in their on-campus options due to a housing shortage. Sophia Gordon is also notable as a climate-friendly residence hall that runs partly on solar power.

#### NOTABLE SPEAKERS

An author, a CEO, an evening news anchor, and the founder of the internet all stopped by the Tufts campus this year to deliver lectures and receive awards. Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses* and *Midnight's Children* and the former target of a

fatwa and numerous death threats, delivered a lecture entitled "Step across This Line" to a packed crowd in Cohen Auditorium. The September lecture decried the evils of censorship, championed the value of literature, and mixed serious comments about Rushdie's life and religion with lighthearted remarks and even jokes about his former enemy, the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Jamie Dimon, A78, returned to campus in March to receive the annual *Light on the Hill* award for his accomplishments as CEO of J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., including his reputation as the "toughest guy on wall street."

March also marked the Snyder Presidential Lecture Series with a visit from the founder of the internet, Sir Tim Berners-Lee. The computer science engineer spoke on the internet's history, censorship on the World Wide Web, the flexibility of the format for distributing information and its nearly limitless power for expansion, and the democratizing effects of recent developments such as blogging and Wikipedia.

April brought the Edward R. Murrow Symposium to the Fletcher School and a panel that included alumnus and Professor Neil Shapiro and the long-time voice of the ABC evening news program *Nightline*, Ted Koppel. The ageless Koppel began the symposium with an adaptation of his famous line, "I'm Ted Koppel and this is Tufts University," and moderated an intriguing discussion on modern journalism and the legacy of E.R. Murrow with a panel of distinguished guests.

#### REAL WORLD

The newest installment of the MTV's *The Real World*, the seventeenth season, finds seven twenty-somethings living together in a trendy home in Key West, Florida. Their drunken exploits, efforts at keeping a job, and generally amusing lives are displayed for all the voyeurs (or viewers) at home on a Thursday night wishing that their own lives were as fantastic as these seven characters. This season however, Tyler Duckworth, A04, stars as one of the twenty-somethings who described his pre-*Real World* life as follows; "A long run followed by a meal of meat, cheese and ketchup. Usually I'd work on my gymnastics then journal. In the evening I'd eat a burrito with some friends and read." In addition to being a Tufts graduate, Duckworth was also a gymnast. ☺

# We're Still in the Desert

On Monday afternoon, CNN released the results of its latest opinion poll regarding President Bush's job performance. Not surprisingly, the President's approval rating continues to slide—only 32 percent of the poll's respondents approved of how Bush is handling his job, while 60 percent disapproved. Results were similarly negative for other measures of the President's performance. Forty-seven percent of respondents believed that "competent" was an accurate characterization of President Bush, 46 percent described him as "a strong and decisive leader," and just 40 percent described him as "honest and trustworthy." The results of the poll indicate that half of both registered voters and all Americans would vote for a Democrat if the midterm elections were held today.

As dire as the results may be for the President and the Republican Party, the poll was even more intriguing because of the questions that it did not ask. In addition to the general questions about the President's job performance and voting intentions, respondents were also asked questions about gas prices. Despite the central role that it has played in the steady decline of Bush's approval ratings, they were not asked about the war in Iraq.

When American military casualties rose sharply in late 2004 and early 2005, media coverage of and public outrage against the war reached a fevered pitch. Daily headlines in the country's major

newspapers centered around the deaths of soldiers and Marines, and support for the war, which had previously been fairly even with opposition, largely dissipated. When asked to think about the goals versus the costs of the Iraq war, nearly three-quarters of respondents to Washington Post-ABC polls saw U.S. military casualties as unacceptable following that period. Only 41 percent of those polled believed that the Iraq war was worth fighting.

The unfortunate result of the intense media coverage and public outcry was that the idiocy of the war largely became a settled issue. Despite the asinine allegations coming from supporters of the war of biased Iraq media coverage, reporting of daily happenings, including casualties, in Iraq have fallen to pitiful levels. Whether the public has been desensitized to combat coverage or the media has abandoned it for the new angle, reporting on Iraq in major outlets has been reduced almost entirely to process stories about the Bush Administration's mishandling of the war and Iraqi government politics. Over a four-day period early this week, a span that witnessed the combat deaths of nine American soldiers, the New York Times limited its reporting of the war to stories about the Iraqi Parliament and Prime Minister, and issues peripheral to Iraq, such as former military officers' calls for the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Pictures of American military personnel made the cover only once, in a photograph of President Bush eating lunch with Marines in California. The newspaper's reporting of the casualties was buried within a story about Iraqi politics in the middle of the International News section.

Make no mistake, despite the reduced coverage of combat in Iraq, the United States' full-scale occupation of a Middle Eastern country is the country's most momentous issue now and for the foreseeable future. Other stories, such as the Duke lacrosse scandal and Secretary Rumsfeld's embattled position, while important, pale in comparison to the significance of American troops continuing to serve in a constantly hostile and often fatal environment.

These facts continue to be true of the Iraq war: American military fatalities continue to occur at a rate in line the war's averages—more than two and a half per day in April, an estimated 36 Iraqi civilians are killed in a typical day—that means they experience a loss of life equivalent to 9/11 every two and half months, and there is still no end in sight.

The real danger of the media lack of reporting on and the country's apparent desensitization to the horrors of the Iraq war is that it will continue long after it is obvious that it is an unsalvageable situation. In Vietnam, a situation that was much more similar to Iraq than anyone seems comfortable admitting, American casualties doubled near the end of the war after it was widely agreed that victory could not be achieved. The result was that the last 25,000 casualties of that war are nearly impossible to justify. It would be unacceptable for the country's collective short attention span to recreate this tragedy. ☹

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# A Dorm Room with a View

*At the end of his first year of college, MIKE SNYDER takes a moment to reflect on his favorite aspect of freshman life.*



I made a mental list the other day of all the freshman perks that I will surely miss next year. I thought about the thrill and awkwardness of meeting hundreds of new people for the first time, mused over the free bag full of now broken merchandise I received during orientation, and reflected upon my touristy experiences in unfamiliar Boston and Somerville, cities I now know quite intimately.

Though what I will miss most as a sophomore isn't any of those. After all, I can say quite confidently that encountering new people, new cities, and bags full of new stuff will be in the future for the good majority of us. What I will really regret leaving behind is something more intangible. I guess it has a lot to do with my quaint little room on the east side of Metcalf, and a particular window in that room overlooking Latin Way and the campus center. I keep this window open always, blinds raised. To think that so much wonder, solace and creative energy has come from a 6 by 2.5 foot hole in the wall.

For one thing, the admissions tours walk right past it. Imagine half a dozen tours over the course of an hour staggering down the tiny sidewalk to Dewick, the prospective students aligned single or double file, their apathetic faces fixed mechanically on the tour guide. Occasionally

a parent might nod, laugh, smile, or show some sign of humanity, but otherwise the scene is strangely reminiscent of cattle herding. Did I look so unaware, so eerily lifeless, when I walked the same route last year?

Peering down at them from my third floor window, I feel deity-like, at once protective and detached. Yet it would be all too easy for me to stick my head out and yell something down to them. I haven't done it for fear of admissions office reprisal, but if I had only one chance, I would be shamelessly blunt: "Hey prospective students, you guys have no idea what you're getting into! You have no idea of the joy and frustration, wild experiences, and range of people you will encounter here! So go home and stop worrying, because everything will turn out alright!"

It will be unfortunate to see them all go next year—those hundreds of strangers I will never meet, yet in some freakish way know all too well—but I think what I will miss more is lying in bed on weekend mornings, dreamy and half-asleep, quietly absorbing the panoply of sounds and timbres that find their way through my window. Kids Day I distinctly remember. I think the collective childhood giggling woke me up around 10:00. For three hours the blithe sounds of elementary schoolers, unburdened by finals and resumes and negativity in general, filled my ears. By the time I got out of bed, however, the kids had all gone home. It dawned on me then that I had seen hardly any children less than 12 years of age for almost 6 months.

The sound of heavy winter winds, April showers, and rowdy bands of drunkards are fairly common. One time at 3:30 in the morning, two clown cars pulled up right next to the student bookstore. Half a dozen men sporting big black downs emerged from each, formed battle lines in the street, and started yelling and gesturing angrily at each other. I gaped at the spectacle for about an hour, hearing more curse words than an Eminem music video, and just when a fist fight seemed imminent, they popped back into their sedans, and sped off.

Despite the thrill and excitement of 8:00 a.m. cycling meets and 8:00 p.m. awareness rallies, the most serene moments of my Tufts experience come Sunday mornings. It's rare, but on the off chance that I happen to awake before noon, I enjoy staring pensively out the window at the exotic, almost surreal scene in front of me. The campus is dead. Everybody is sleeping off hangovers or working on IR papers; the endless stream of cars and trucks cease. Even the wind lets up, and the only thing proving that time has not totally stopped is the sun rising over the horizon, slowly but surely. There must be some unwritten rule about Sunday mornings that I don't know about. If I cried out and screamed in no particular direction, I wonder if anyone would hear me.

Next year I will also have a window. It'll probably be the same off-white color, chipped and scratched in a few places, worn from use. Maybe even the same size. It doesn't really matter, though, because next year's window overlooks a quiet courtyard, a stubby patch of unkempt grass that only the squirrels know of.

There's one thing I forgot to mention. My view extends well beyond Latin Way and the campus center. Reslife must like me, because they gave me a picturesque view of downtown Boston. Sometimes when I'm relaxed, I tilt my head towards the Prudential Center, where last August I sat with my parents at the top of the hub for an early dinner, admiring the view of this strange new city. Maybe if by some cosmic fluke light traveled a little slower, I would see myself nine months in the past, looking down at myself from 750 feet up.

You know, maybe what I'll miss most from freshman year isn't *outside* my window at all, but *inside* it. That must be why I feel so nostalgic right now. There are still three weeks left of school, and I already miss myself—the inquisitive, free-thinking, contemplative first year, relentlessly surveilling and observing. Window or not, sophomore year will not be the same. ☹

*Mike Snyder, LA '09, has not yet declared a major.*

# Something's Going to Give

BY NATE GRUBMAN

The Bush Administration has stated that it cannot accept a nuclear-armed Iran. Iran has called its nuclear program “irreversible.” Something's going to give, and when it does the world could be a much more dangerous place.

The possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran is a scary thought. With an extremely young population, a command of sky rocketing oil prices and nuclear weapons, Iran would be able to dominate a strategically important region. A country that is likely the foremost benefactor of terrorist groups such as Hezbollah would have the nuclear weapons to possibly arm these groups. Also scary is the possibility of a nuclear confrontation between Iran and Israel.

Scariest yet is the reality that the US may not be able to do anything about it.

President Bush has asserted that the US will use diplomacy, hardly his strong point, to have its way. In all likelihood, however, Bush's diplomatic words will ring hollow after his tough talk about Iran as a nation of evil.

In truth, it is hard to blame Iran for developing nuclear weapons. For a country that has been demonized by a US government that has shown the will to use invasion to invoke regime change, nuclear weapons offer a certain security and status. With the

President Bush has asserted that the US will use diplomacy, hardly his strong point, to have its way. In all likelihood, however, Bush's diplomatic words will ring hollow after his tough talk about Iran as a nation of evil.

US bogged down in Iraq, Iran is striking at an opportune time.

This is the main cost of the Iraq War. The US army is stuck in Iraq for the moment. The failure of its action has led to a rising international and domestic opposition to the US use of force. With finite troops, financing and political capital, the US is ill equipped to

pursue its expansive foreign policy. Thus, the US must painfully sit on the sideline.

Complicating matters is the decrepit state of the US's intelligence. US policymakers have recently admitted that while some believe Iran could be five years away from gaining nuclear weapons, they actually have no idea when Iran could go nuclear.

Thus, the US faces a terrifying situation. We don't know when it will strike. And there's little we can do about it. Of

## Bunker-busting nuclear bomb is nothing more than an enormous, extremely heavy nuclear weapon.

course President Bush has never been one to admit defeat.

According to an article by Seymour Hersh in the April 17 issue of *The New Yorker*, the US is preparing for an attack on Iran to remove Mahmoud Ahmadinejad from power. Although US troops are tied down in Iraq, Bush believes, according to Hersh, that the US can overcome this obstacle by relying heavily on its bombing capability. That includes the use of nuclear bunker-busting bombs.

“Wild speculation,” President Bush called it at first. Given the fact that the article relies on largely anonymous sources, it's hard to say how speculative it really is.

All we can do is consider the track records and the logic of those involved.

The name on the byline belongs to famed muckraker Seymour Hersh, who came to Tufts to speak last year. Hersh, the man who broke the Abu Ghraib story, has been breaking big stories for over 35 years. While Hersh has been occasionally

criticized for his credibility, his track record of breaking big stories is almost unparalleled. Certainly his track record during the Iraq War was better than that of Bush, whose story of those elusive weapons of mass destruction just didn't pan out.

Bush later admitted that if diplomacy fails, “all options are on the table” to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear weapons, an occurrence that the Bush administration considers unthinkable.

Given that the US has sworn to prevent Iran from going nuclear, diplomacy is likely to fail and the US is unlikely to have the flexibility to launch a conventional attack on Iran, speculation about the nuclear option no longer looks so “wild.”

What does this mean? Whenever a qualifying word such as bunker-busting or tactical is tagged onto the front of nuclear weapons, it tends to diminish the impact of these words.

For this reason, it is important to remember that a bunker-busting nuclear bomb is nothing more than an enormous, extremely heavy nuclear weapon. Although it explodes after traveling roughly 30 meters into the Earth, the weapon still creates great damage to the Earth and emits dangerous levels of radiation.

Also it would be total hypocrisy for the US to continue its legacy as the only country in the world to use nuclear weapons in combat only to prevent another country from having the chance.

These risks associated with using the bomb are unacceptable, especially given the slim chance that such a bombing strategy itself could bring Iran to its knees.

The War in Iraq has put the US in a tough spot. Living with a nuclear Iran could be a scary proposition, but it's certainly less scary than another war, especially if it's nuclear. ☪

*Nate Grubman, LA '08, has not yet declared a major.*



# Myths, Facts and Totes

BY MARA SACKS

It might as well be a brown and blue tote bag. The token giveaway seems as estimable a factor as any to sway the college decision in one direction or another. The little canvas campaign of this year's April Open House may seem inconsequential, but as education quality is often indistinguishable among top universities, finding a tangible excuse to pick one school over another has become an arbitrary task. Once the big issues of location, climate, class size, and ranking have stripped lists of undesirable options, collegiate dog and pony shows become key factors for fall enrollment. Although the Tufts' administration has gone to great

**Truth: It is easier to find Osama than a hygienic place to dry your hands in dormitory bathrooms.**

lengths to dazzle admitted students with stimulating academic panels, bright-eyed tour guides, and world-class Dewick meals, when decision time rolls around, most pre-frosh will be guided by an assortment of misinformation.

Ask current Tufts students about their first impression of Tufts, and the responses will range from the poignantly accurate to the comically absurd. Whether led to believe Tufts is a hedonistic party school after getting bombed at AOH, or that college is one giant croquet match on the quad, after a few weeks as a student, the pristine vision attained during a spring visit becomes clouded with an array of inconsistencies that make pin-pointing the essence of Tufts impossible. In spite of the artificial portrayal of Tufts that can be surmised from a hiccup glimpse in mid-April, there is some truth in every myth. After two years here, my understanding of Tufts is very different from that gained during my short stint as a pre-frosh. Although I am very happy with my decision to come to Tufts, I would have appreciated knowing the truth behind the following myths.

**Myth: They give away free goodies on a regular basis.**

**Truth: Students shell out a lot of money on stuff that should be free.**

After being inundated with t-shirts, mugs and gym bags during freshman orientation, a steady incline in expenditures will seize summer savings. From pricey lattes, to Balch theater tickets, most students surrender their wallets to campus expenses more frequently than naïve pre-frosh could ever anticipate.

**Myth: There are paper towels in the bathrooms.**

**Truth: It is easier to find Osama than a hygienic place to dry your hands in dormitory bathrooms.**

There is no excuse for this nonsense, but you get used to it.

**Myth: Every student at Tufts loves it here.**

**Truth: Most do.**

Even though Tufts has its share of discontent Ivy-ennivous students, they are by far in the minority. Although periods of self-doubt and selection-regret are generally a staple of the freshman experience, as a whole Tufts is filled with enthusiastic students.

**Myth: You will go to all of the lectures and plays that look interesting.**

**Truth: There are always a million things to do. You just won't have time to do them.**

In spite of the repertoire of interesting speakers, and shows featuring talented student groups, IR term papers and Beirut tournaments have a funny way of limiting attendance at even the most desirable Tuftslife events.

**Myth: Tufts is lush and green.**

**Truth: For about three weeks during the academic year students don't complain about being outside.**

But for those few weeks, it is incredible.

**Myth: Tufts has a vibrant dating scene.**

**Truth: Tufts is a hook-up school.**

Even though most students grow tired of the detached dance-floor make out, and the repentant walk of shame, it is unusual to strike a healthy balance between academics, friends and a meaningful relationship. Luckily the system feeds a healthy stream of gossip and melodrama that fills the void of a significant other.

**Myth: By sophomore year you will lose the freshman fifteen.**

**Truth: Unless you have the metabolism of a pubescent boy, or the willpower of Mary-Kate Olsen, seeing new and unwanted curves is just something to anticipate throughout college.**

It's not really as terrible as it sounds; plotting new and exciting ways to lose weight is an effective way to stay stimulated during lectures.

**Myth: You will get many important emails a day.**

**Truth: You will get countless emails from organizations you absentmindedly considered joining during freshman year.**

Whether or not this is a common myth that influences one's college decision, most first year students would not consider the long term commitment an email list entails. A mandatory disclaimer should be introduced into activities fair that forewarn of the inability to remove oneself from a club via email. [If anyone from Tornticket is reading this, I respect your work, but sending me ten emails a day will not get me on stage.]

**Myth: Tufts is eager to fund crazy adventures in pursuit of intellectual curiosity.**

**Truth: There is money; it is just hard to get your hands on.**

Although Tufts boast research funding and monetary rewards for ambitious plans, Tufts is limited by history of poor endowment. If you are creative and have the support of a faculty member however, the university will make it worth your while. ☺

*Mara Sacks, LA '08, is majoring in psychology and art history.*

# I Swear There Used to Be a Door There

BY VINDA RAO

This isn't happening. I cannot be graduating in three weeks. There's no way I can get an apartment and secure a job and get paid and use that money to pay rent, insurance bills, and utilities. No no no if I ignore these issues they will magically go away and I'll open my eyes and be back in Texas living with my parents and everything will be easy and my dad will take me to Starbucks and I'll bum around my high school and visit my old teachers who will pat me on the back and commend me for being so intelligent and utterly useless. Actually, that really could happen and then I'd be clusterfucked, so I should stick with Plan A and use my procrastination-free college career to step up in the world. I bought a book called *This is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared*, thinking it would give me advice on how to manage my state of senseless denial about moving on; it turned out to be a book on rituals in Judaism. Frustrated, I put the book in a drawer and stomped my feet angrily. Dude, I'm a Hindu!

Damnit—why is it so hard for me to get excited about being independent and self-sufficient? Why does it feel like I'm a two-year-old taking swimming lessons?

I'm not going to be a grad-school refugee, one of the nervous seniors who decide to get a higher degree in something they're not even sure will help them simply to avoid having to leave the comfort of campus life.

I just know I'm going to be bawling like a bridesmaid in less than a month and holding onto my friends' arms until they feel physically uncomfortable and force me to stop. The structure of my days is disappearing and I can't do anything to slow it down; the hierarchy of achievements is crumbling. After freshman year there was

sophomore year, after high school there was college, after middle school there was junior high—but what about now? After I graduate and get a job, how do I benchmark my progress? By continuing to work and continuing to look at my diploma? I'm not going to be a grad-school refugee, one of the nervous seniors who decide to get a higher degree in something they're not even sure will help them simply to avoid having to leave the comfort of campus life. I know it would just prolong the inevitable. It's like quitting something cold turkey . . . you don't say "you have to stop drinking" and then give a kid a case of Little Boomey.

I'm pretty sure it all comes down to friends: I don't want to seriously think about how life is going to be when I wake up every day and can't meet someone for lunch because she's in the middle of Uzbekistan doing research on farm animals. Gahhhh this situation is a jagged brick of *deja-vu* hitting me in the face and to be quite honest, thank you, I don't care for it at all. It seems like every three-to-four years somebody makes me pack up everything and move far away, or everybody around me packs up their things and moves far away, and I'm walking into walls whimpering and muttering "but there used to be a door there!" God, I'm pathetic.

I've done eight internships in four years and I still don't know how my colleagues do it—wake up at six a.m. every morning and stay at work until six in the evening and then expect to maintain a functional state of psychological being. I fear becoming one of those automatons (which, by nature of my habits and familial upbringing, I'm destined



to embrace) who chant "work is my life" over and over and come back from the gym by eight p.m., eat an unsatisfying \$3.50-ounce Healthy Choice meal while watching *Fear Factor* and the *Apprentice*. I hate the freakin' *Apprentice*. I'd rather watch snow melt. Hell, I'd rather sit outside without a coat and feel snow melt.

With all of these semi-rational fears being actualized at once, why do I feel like the only person panicking and hiding Graduation announcements, like they were back-issues of *Penthouse*? I don't even read *Penthouse*. See? See what this is doing to me? Maybe I should go to the Critical Thinking Center by Metcalf and just critically think about these impending crises for the span of several days. In fact, maybe I'll apply for a job there, since no one could accuse me of being superficial if I work in a freakin' Critical Thinking Center. Plus, I don't think Tufts even has a Halfass Ruminating Center, so I know they wouldn't be able to transfer me there if I messed up. Oh wait, my bad, it's called ResLife. What if I were transferred to the Office of Residential Life and Learning?

On second thought, maybe this Graduation thing isn't so bad after all. OH-SIX! ☉

Vinda Rao, LA '06, is majoring in English and French.



# 6-Disk Changer:

## Béla Fleck & the Flecktones' *The Hidden Land*



BY JOHN DECARLI

**B**éla Fleck & the Flecktones have been blurring the lines between genres for over ten years. Comprised of musicians of the absolute highest caliber, the band's effortless tightness and jaw-dropping virtuosity have paved the way for some fantastic music. Combining the bluegrass sounds of Fleck's banjo with the funk of Victor Wooten's bass, the jazz of Jeff Coffin's horns, and the experimentations of a percussionist known simply as Futureman, the Flecktones have made some impressive music over the years, but nothing has been as groundbreaking and stunning as their new release, *The Hidden Land*.

For years the Flecktones were, for many people, a band that existed to showcase the immense talent of its members. Their songs were secondary to the solos being passed around. Fleck would wow with the ease of his command over the banjo and the interesting ways he fit its sound into so many types of music, Coffin would puff up his cheeks and somehow play two saxes at once, and Wooten would stun with his improbable speed and unique style. The Flecktones are so good at this it's no wonder

they did it for so long. Each musician is at the very top of his field, particularly Wooten (it's little use trying to describe how good he is here; his bass speaks for itself, and it speaks loudly and proudly). The band experimented with innovative song structures, weird time signatures and additional musicians, but little they did completely broke the mold. Until now.

Prior to the album's release this past February, the band took a year off to explore other musical ideas, and the time away has paid off marvelously. The Flecktones are reinvigorated and use their new energy to put together the best album of their career. I was thrilled to see that their music now completely transcends pure showmanship and becomes something much more. *The Hidden Land* is a focused, mature, exciting work, an album that clicks on all levels.

One of the best aspects of *The Hidden Land* is its momentum. Many tracks run together, creating a more seamless overall work and giving the sense of forward progress and moving towards a goal. Similarly, each track is right where it needs to be to create its atmosphere, a dreamy, subdued feeling that works perfectly. The Flecktones have always juxtaposed different genres of music, but the difference is that now they all work and fit together, whereas albums like *Little Worlds*, as the title suggests, presented disconnected and varied themes. Now the singular *Hidden Land* bridges the gap between tracks, holding everything together.

The first three or four songs serve to get the album rolling and create its tone, but end up a little tame compared with the rest of *The Hidden Land*. They're good introductions, but as individual songs they lack the spark the others have. The album really gets going, however, with "Kaleidoscope." Its slinky, infectious groove distracts the listener until they are surprised with a rhythmically complex breakdown and then a complete change of direction as the kaleidoscope turns, revealing another piece of the composition. The tightness of the band makes itself

apparent here and throughout the album, most obviously on the amazing "Chennai." The song opens with an ominous, atmospheric introduction, Fleck's banjo echoing in the background. Soon Wooten and Futureman lay down a thick yet airy 5/4 groove, and the song really gets off and running when Coffin's flute enters the mix. Flute is often an odd instrument in contemporary popular music, but Coffin's confident playing makes it perfect for "Chennai." It becomes the song's focal point as the breezy melody plays on top of the beat. The most amazing aspect of "Chennai," however, is when Fleck and Coffin simultaneously play a series of quick, staccato notes that build and build but never fall apart. The interplay between the two musicians is truly astounding; they are so perfectly in synch it sounds as if one instrument is making all that sound.

Another standout track is "Misunderstood." The penultimate song is an oddly affecting number whose power doesn't slap you in the face so much as gradually make itself apparent. It begins with a slow, mellow bass line, the song's theme. After a brief interlude, Wooten returns to theme and over the next three minutes or so the sound builds ever so slowly. The musicians enter patiently, adding light textural touches to the mix. Soon Wooten adds another bass line performed live through the help of a sampler, and then Fleck and Coffin each double their sound, and then triple it. It's like a wave swelling and swelling until it crashes back into the theme.

By "The Whistle Tune," the album's fragile and beautiful closing track, the Flecktones have reached the hidden land. They've created an amazing work, an album which only becomes better with subsequent listens. The songs are well-crafted, the playing top-notch as always, and the flow and focus unmatched by any of the band's previous efforts. After so many promising years filled with great music, The Flecktones have finally made the album they've always been capable of making. 🎧

# Tufts Stars Have a Conscience: Guster Goes Green



CYNTHIA McMURRY

BY STEPHANIE CHIN

“Our guy Adam hit his head on a tampon dispenser and had to go to the hospital.”

The first thing I heard from Ryan Miller, lead singer and guitarist for the renowned musical trio and famous Tufts alumni, Guster, was an apology that he couldn’t take my call. The band’s other frontman, Adam Gardener, was in the hospital getting four staples in his head after a rather unorthodox accident.

I was curious to know more about the matter—no doubt it would have

provided for a more amusing phone interview—but Ryan insisted he would call me later as he had to take Adam’s place at a national press conference on Bio-Diesel in East Lansing, Michigan. Of course, I understood. We agreed to converse a few hours later that day, so I closed my cell phone with sweaty palms and proceeded to play “Barrel of a Gun” in iTunes. (FYI: The tampon story is now posted as a road journal on the band’s official website.)

## A BAND WITH A CONSCIENCE

Recognized as one of the most successful bands in the Northeast,

Guster features vocalists Ryan Miller (LA ’95) and Adam Gardener (LA ’95), and percussionist Brian Rosenworcel (LA ’95). They met during the Tufts Wilderness Orientation trip in the fall of 1991, and became fast friends. All three had played in high school bands and showed serious musical talent. “Gus”—as they were then called—played their first gig at Midnight Café. After much persistent performing on campus, and often jamming in Harvard Square, the three eventually independently released their debut album, *Parachute*, in 1994.

Five records later, Guster returns to Tufts for this year’s much



anticipated big concert. (Their last Tufts performance was Spring Fling 2001.) They are presently touring the country with more than just music on their agenda. In fact, the band will interrupt their Campus Consciousness Tour to stop at their alma mater. The project, an entertaining and informative attempt to promote an eco-friendly lifestyle, was started by Adam and his wife, Lauren Sullivan (whom he met at Tufts). Guster heads the non-profit organization REVERB, which promotes environmental preservation and energy conservation and actively supports the use of biodiesel fuel.

STEPH: What started your interest in environmentalism? Was it a class you took here at Tufts?

RYAN: It's just being part of the culture. It was the Tufts environment and being at a liberal arts school. I would definitely say that being at school there had something to do with our interest. [*Chuckles.*] Maybe it was that Wilderness Orientation trip we took.

STEPH: Do you know what you want REVERB's focus to be? Or are you taking more of a holistic approach to environmental protection?

RYAN: It's a music industry thing. We were just trying to think of a way to lessen our impact [from touring]. Just with the amount of gas we were using, we were running the generator 24/7. We started looking at different resources and our focus became bio-diesel—saving clean energy. We decided that all of our concerts would be offset by wind energy as opposed to coal energy. It's a pretty ambitious thing we got going on.

STEPH: I've been reading a little about the organization. Can you tell me what exactly an eco-village is?

RYAN: It's basically a set of tents where we have information available. The bulk of this is trying to raise awareness about issues like biodiesel and clean energy.

And people can do some community service. We also run a food drive—that's the interactive part of it.

STEPH: It's impressive that you mounted your musical career so independently. Would you say you saw the same kind of difficulties when you started the organization?

RYAN: I know [Adam] has been working really hard on it, and he's coming from a good place because he's got a lot of support and money from other organizations. Of course, it's a very

with the organization for two years and there've been plenty of difficulties, just getting it off the ground and trying to find corporate [support]. It takes money for people to come out and it takes money to hire people. Even with donations, you have to pay different people. It just costs money—it really requires financial support.

STEPH: Can you explain a little more about what you do when you visit colleges to promote REVERB? How do you really get your message across?

RYAN: Well, we did a press conference today with the mayor of East Lansing and the National Bio-Diesel board. We just had this roundtable discussion with the organization; [and discussed] what they should do, what projects the administration should pass, what the committee's real issues are.

STEPH: Are there any other causes the band is supportive of?

RYAN: We're all pretty politically aware. This is the first big thing that we've actually gotten behind though; it's not just an anti-Bush thing. We supported John Kerry on his campaign trail. This is something a little less preachy, it's something where we can say, "Look, clean energy, clean fuel is available, we can raise awareness."

STEPH: What does the Campus Consciousness Tour mean to Guster? What do you hope to achieve? Is there ever a moment when you feel you've gotten the job done?

RYAN: Well, there are two aspects to the Campus Consciousness Tour. There's the nonprofit, non-commercial aspect, and then there's the musical aspect. I guess coming from the nonprofit part of it, I think it's been a real success. Hopefully this is something we can continue. I think we're basically trying to teach other people, we're trying to be a model.



ANGELA ROBINS

similar dynamic where you're trying to convince schools that you're going to come in and try to do something good. There's always the worry of "how much is this going to cost?" There's definitely a comparison to trying to get our band off the ground.

STEPH: From what you saw with Adam, was it really hard to start this organization or were people immediately supportive of it?

RYAN: I think [Adam] had a hard time getting funding. We've been involved

And Guster has done just that. The trio serves as a positive role model both in the music business and the non-profit world. Today, REVERB is sponsored by countless number of organizations, including Rock the Earth, Clean Air Council, Seven Generations Ahead, and Zipcar.

The project has also extended a hand in helping other green businesses promote their campaigns by offering to collaborate on all environmentally focused issues. REVERB also receives support from many other artists, like the Barenaked Ladies, Avril Lavigne, and the Dave Matthews Band. Adam's non-profit is a major participant in the umbrella organization ARIA (Artistic Resources in Action), which spearheads the intertwining of public charity with mainstream music. To get more information about the organization or how to get involved with the eco-friendly villages or tours, visit REVERB's official website, [www.reverbrock.org/site](http://www.reverbrock.org/site).

#### GETTING BIGGER THAN THE BEELZEBUBS: THE PROGRESSION OF A MUSICAL CAREER

Other students in the Class of 1995 could certainly testify to Ryan, Adam and Brian's obvious passion for music. Brian brought a pair of bongos to the South Hall dorm he and Ryan shared as freshmen. Ryan clearly remembers their first significant gig: their smashing performance at Hotung Café in the fall of 1992 had a tremendous turnout.

Even before pursuing the band with full-blown determination, the boys of Guster had no trouble exercising their skills. Adam was a member of the elite all-male a cappella group, the Beelzebubs. When asked to seriously join Guster, Adam replied, "The only way that I'd be in this band is if this band gets bigger than the Bubs." Ryan's answer to Adam's ultimatum was a puzzled one. "There's no way we'll ever get bigger than the Beelzebubs," he scoffed. "That was too ludicrous to even consider."

Of the band's first gig, Ryan says "terrible, we were terrible." But of course, they did eventually surpass

the Beelzebubs. Just five years later, Guster pushed their unique sound and style to win a Boston Music Award for Best Live Act in 1997. The band's achievement is really inspirational not only for Jumbos, but for anyone with big dreams. For those pursuing what appears to be a far-fetched goal, there comes a point in time when you have to evaluate if you really want to strive for it or not. For Guster, that moment occurred their junior year (also the year each band-member received five academic "incompletes"), when Ryan and Brian declared, "Well, we could do this."

From then on, there were no doubts about pursuing their interests in the band beyond a college hobby. Ryan continues, "After [the release of *Parachute*], we were able to tour and make money. So when it was time for us to graduate, we basically bought a van our last semester and went from there."

Considering their performances on the Conan O'Brien show and Woodstock '99, Ryan admits that musically, much of Guster has changed since their debut album. "We're completely different from when we released that record and it's



SARAH MOSHONTZ DE LA ROCHA



## BIODIESEL FACTS:

Biodiesel is a clean burning alternative fuel which can be blended with petroleum. It is domestic and renewable fuel derived from natural oils such as soybean oil. It is simple to use, biodegradable and non-toxic. Biodiesel is environmental-friendly because it is made from renewable resources and has lower emissions than regular petroleum diesel. It is produced in the US and thus decreases dependence on foreign oil and contributes to the national economy.

- From Biodiesel.org, the official website of the National Biodiesel Board.

something we've been fighting in a lot of ways. I don't think there's anything similar—the instrumentation is completely different. Maybe our approach to songwriting is similar in a way, but the instrumentation and lyrical approach have totally changed. There is a melodic sensibility that's consistent over our last five records, but that's really about it."

Any hardcore fan of Guster would most definitely know this: all their albums do sound different, but it's hard to claim that one is particularly better than another. While *Parachute* isn't exactly mainstream, everyone has heard their hit "Amsterdam" (from the album *Keep It Together*) or seen the well-known music video for "Fa Fa," which was shot in an L.A. roller-skating rink.

For those wondering about the band's academic interests, Brian graduated with a degree in American studies while Adam pursued the popular psychology major. Ryan didn't seem to have any regrets about his comparative religion studies. In fact, he gives a grateful shout-out to Professor Emeritus Howard Hunter: "What's up, Howard!"

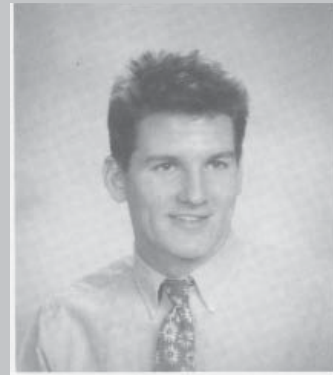
"WE HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF THE  
TUFTS COMMUNITY"

Guster's reappearance at Tufts means a lot to us—and to them. It's a reminder of the band's beginnings and a lot of fond recollections from when they were Jumbos. I felt an eerie sense of recognition when Ryan described to me the different dorms they inhabited while at Tufts ... Carmichael, Bush, Houston, even his participation in what is probably Tufts' wildest tradition, the Naked Quad Run. I was delighted to hear their story of success and what it was like finding their passion at Tufts—the story of finding each other. I wasn't surprised to hear a certain nostalgia in Ryan's voice when he admitted that just being in the area, where the guys had lived for four more years after graduation, was very evocative.

Ryan shows no sign of aging. Looking forward to his return, he expressed disappointment when he mentioned that Guster had to quickly depart after Spring Fling to play a show at Amherst College, squashing any hope of attending any Tufts parties. His fraternity brothers at ATO emailed him and proposed he have a beer with them in their "disgusting, dirty basement." With longing in voice, he replied, "That would have been awesome, that would have been my favorite moment of the whole tour."

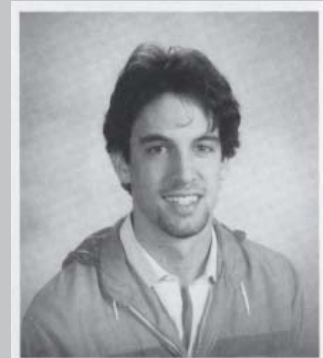
I listened to "Homecoming King" after we'd hung up and smiled at Ryan's lyrics, "*It keeps on pushing you out/ Into the arms of 1994/ So count the days till you give in/ Back to Massachusetts/ To your golden age where your crown is shining bright.*" I knew exactly what he was talking about.

Those of us who have been disappointed with the last few Spring Flings need not worry. Our cherished alumni return to restore the magic of their last visit. This Saturday, Guster will be joined by Californian hip-hop duo Blackalicious, indie rockers The Slip, and the winner of this year's Battle of the Bands, Melodesiac. Right before we hung up, Ryan gave me a final promise: "We're gonna try to not pull another Busta Rhymes on you guys. We won't take your money and not play." ☺



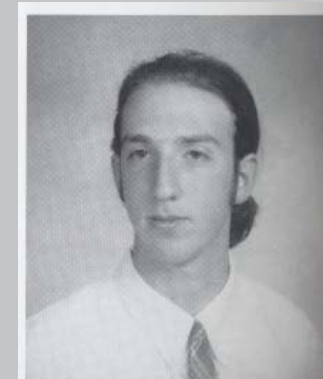
**Adam Gardner**  
*Psychology*

Adam is from New Jersey. He stands stage right, plays guitar and sings. In high school, he played in a band called Royal Flush.



**Brian A. Rosenworcel**  
*American Studies*

Brian hails from West Hartford, Connecticut. He plays drums and is the youngest bandmember.



**Ryan M. Miller**  
*Religion*

Ryan, originally from Texas, stands stage left. He plays guitar and sings, and is the oldest bandmember.

TUFTS ARCHIVES

# Not Quite 21? Trade In That Hairbrush For a Real Mic and SING IT at *Limelight*!

By JOSEPHINE CHOW

Are you an obnoxious shower singer? Do you shamelessly rock out to Kelly Clarkson while dancing in your underwear? Are you an undercover fan of Backstreet Boys or Britney Spears? Or do you just love singing out loud in general? If your answer to any of the above questions is yes, then trade that hairbrush for a real mic and prepare to sing some karaoke at *Limelight Stage and Studios*!

Boston weather is erratic enough. So when it's raining and cold, it doesn't take the reality of not being 21 and not having a fake to convince you that a night-in with greasy Chinese food and a movie is the only solution. But with the opening of *Limelight Stage and Studios* last year, many are curing their blues with a dose of karaoke from this ever-increasingly popular venue.

A brisk two minute walk from the Boylston station at the south end of the Commons, *Limelight* is refreshingly accessible compared to its technologically-challenged karaoke counterpart, *Do Re Mi Music Studio*, located in Allston.

Because of its non-descript entrance, *Limelight* is often overlooked in the bustling Theater district. Nevertheless, its interior boasts a non-exclusive welcoming atmosphere to both 21 and under 21 year-olds. With its incredible karaoke technology and attention-loving but fun-embracing crowd, *Limelight* proves to be unlike any party experience.

The studio itself is divided into two sections, the general open lounge and stage area, as well as the private studio rooms at the back of the club. While renting the private rooms is a little pricey (\$10 per person/hour), admission into the stage and lounge costs only \$5 and the fee earns you both entry as well as access to the open mic on the stage.

Like many other clubs, the open lounge is dimly lit with cozy couches and small European coffee tables all around. Its simple rectangular floor plan cuts no corners and shifts the lateral focus to the end of the house where the stage is located. With its flamboyant swirling lights, there is a clear emphasis on the stage area where all are welcomed to perform and bask in their

three minutes of fame.

For the bar-linger alcoholic, the bar area is unfortunately not in a great location, lingering in obscurity around the back corner with the private studio rooms. But with all the fun going on, you hardly need liquor to put you in the mood. Packed with karaoke aficionados, the place is bursting with such adrenaline that everyone feels compelled to join in the singing and the dancing along with the performer on stage. Simply put, there is neither space for self-consciousness nor time for embarrassment at *Limelight*.

My friends and I entered the *Studios* pleasantly awed by the loud, obnoxious, yet delightfully off-key cacophony to Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" (a.k.a. the fabulous opening song in the cult classic movie *Wayne's World*). Needless to say, it was quite an energetic crowd. During the singing, people were not only standing up on the tables, but also jumping on the couches.

For serious limelight lovers who yearn to show off their vocal talents all night long, however, it may be better to book a private studio room since the wait for the stage can get quite frustrating with the large crowds during open mic nights.

As mentioned before, the private studios are a little expensive, but given its advanced technological equipment and luxurious setting, it is well worth the price. For one, the level of privacy immediately grants people the creative license to go insane within the confines of the studio. Every studio room has a perfectly squared floor plan with a plush leather sofa. The most impressive aspect, however, is its amazing technology. Gone are the days at *Do Re Mi* when you have to wait for the owner to manually change the discs for each song. At *Limelight Studios*, the customers choose their songs with a simple touch-sensitive LCD screen that can be moved and shifted 360 degrees according to their sitting or standing position while they are singing.

One touch on the screen and you will also have the power to manipulate how the sound comes out of the speakers (from the

vibration and volume to the echoing levels). Moreover, you can even alter the type and color of lighting as well as decide what kind of animation you would like to display on the flat screen karaoke TV. In short, you basically customize the ambience of the room as you like it. And with the door closed and the walls sound-proof, you can dance your head off and scream as loud and off-key as possible to the worst pop songs without a trace of shame. Occasionally, the staff would pop in to offer you a drink of water but otherwise you are quite undisturbed in your karaoke paradise.

Being adventurous karaoke singers, my friends and I toyed with almost every choice available. We began with a cool blue lighting and a video of ocean waves on screen while crooning to Backstreet Boy's "I Want It That Way." Next, we experimented with funky green swirling lights and a fire works animation while chiming to Lou Bega's "Mambo no. 5." After 20 or so 90s classics, we ended our karaoke session with a screaming homage to Britney's "Oops I Did It Again" using hot pink spotlights and a fiery, dancing flames visual.

Of course, you need not become a 90s pop teeny bopper to fully appreciate *Limelight*. The studios are blessed with a far-reaching song collection that includes a variety of genres, featuring artists from pop king and queen Michael Jackson and Madonna to R&B princesses Aaliyah and Beyonce, punk rock bands such as Third Eye Blind and Fort Minor to rappers Jay-Z and Eminem, as well as soft rock and alternative groups such as Cold Play and Postal Service. So really, there is a slice of karaoke for everyone.

As an under 21 year-old, you may be sober at *Limelight Stage and Studios*, but you're bound to have just as much fun and feel just as hot and sweaty from all the carefree dancing and singing than you would at any club. With its adjustable ambience, eclectic music selection, and undiscriminatory age policy, *Limelight* definitely puts the sizzle back into your Boston nightlife on any rainy day. ☺

*Limelight Studios* is located on 204 Tremont St., accessible from the Boylston stop on the Green Line. Open Thurs - Sat from 9 p.m. - 1 a.m., the admission fee is \$5. For more information, visit <http://www.limelightboston.com>.



# The Thrills of Thrift Store Shopping

BY ANNA FELDMAN

Have you ever wondered where that girl in your English class got her fur trimmed peacoat and long wool scarf? Or that guy in your religion class with his worn-in concert tees and tweed blazer? Or anybody at the Crafts House parties, for that matter, with their amazing Halloween costumes and accessories? Well, it's quite possible that they managed to rummage just long enough through bins and racks of used and vintage clothing at one of the many thrift stores peppered throughout Boston to come up with valuable finds. By far the biggest thrill of shopping at thrift stores is the search, the tedious pushing and flinging aside of one ugly thing after another until (cue heavenly light and angelic "ah!"), the most perfect item of clothing presents itself in front of your weary eyes. A large part of this perfection, for me, comes also from the low price of the item. Oh, the joys of frugality. The Garment District in Kendall and the Goodwill in Davis Square top my list of affordable packed-to-the-brim-with-cool-old-clothing-that-no-one-else-on-the-Tufts-campus-will-have thrift stores. Many of the other ones listed here I have not actually visited yet (does my honesty hold no weight?), but credit will be given where it is due (online reviews), and hopefully, I will make it out to them soon enough. And so will you.

Located in the undeniably sketchy surroundings of MIT, The Garment District (contrary to misconception it is not an actual district but a single store!) is a welcome atmosphere from the barren lonely streets of Kendall (to which I can attest since on my visit I was being followed by some homeless dude. The brick corner of the two-story warehouse with its comic book-scripted sign was the most glorious sight of my life). The short entrance staircase brings you directly onto the main floor where racks of vintage and used shoes (cowboy boots to pleather platforms) take up one corner while the back half is dedicated to the largest mound of unwanted clothing I have ever seen. Demanding time to filter through the amount of stuff covering the floor as well as a certain amount of bestial fierceness to fend off the other pairs of searching hands, the clothing-by-the-pound area (clothing in terms of pounds? Crazy!) is a bit overwhelming at first. But a sense of gratification like no other will be yours if

you do end up finding something worthwhile. The upstairs, with its black and white parquet tiles and chipped wooden floors, is packed with circular racks of tee shirts, sweatshirts, pants, skirts, dresses, and sweaters, some in surprisingly newer condition than others, but otherwise hip, funky, and functional. The Garment District also sells hair dye, leg warmers, socks, hats, and scarves.

Okay, so Goodwills in general rock and the one in Davis Square is no exception. Most every time I have walked through those doors, I have walked back out neither empty-handed nor broke. Some items I have purchased in the past include: two mugs and a bowl (both from Pier 1 Imports), a fruit basket, a wine carrying case with French detailing, a mirror, several vases, a bookshelf, and a hanging wicker shelf, all for under thirty dollars. Sure, the entire upstairs is dedicated to clothing and shoes, as well as jewelry and bags, but the real jackpot is down below. A serious mecca for new home and apartment owners on a budget, the downstairs portion of the Goodwill provides an awesome selection of items to fill any kitchen or empty room, in addition to a wealth of old records, CDs, and books.

Italian restaurants and pastry shops aside, the North End has a little bit more to offer, namely, quality consignment shops. Karma and Cadia Vintage both buy and sell designer and high-end clothes and accessories. "Judy Catuogno, who with her twin sister, Joy, runs Karma draws an analogy between New York's Little Italy and Boston's own: 'When the fancy shops moved into SoHo, the funky boutiques started popping up all over Nolita,' just as they are in the North End. Wares at Karma include everything from Fendi furs and evening gowns to Seven jeans and vintage beaded handbags. 'We get items from about ten boutiques as well as from individuals, and take half off the original price,' explains Joy. Black-suede thigh-high boots from John Fluevog (\$150) beckon by the door; white-leather Prada loafers (\$125) sit demurely nearby. Along the racks you'll find Versace, Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, and more. Now that's Italian." \*

As for Cadia Vintage, it's a little out of the way, on the far end of Salem Street, and is open weekends only. "Still, the real trip is inside, as owner Carole Springhetti fills her

cubbyhole of a store with tchotchkes galore. There are lunch pails and hobby planes, antique Kodaks and FireKing custard cups, board games from the '60s and Victorian postcards. Then there are the pre-PC-era goodies: on the highest shelves perch bookends shaped like little Dutch girls (\$45) and geishas (\$12); in a crate on the floor sits a stack of old Playboys. But mid-century costume jewelry takes center stage, from elaborate brooches and clip-on earrings to triple-strand neck candy — all rhinestone and pearl, cameo and coral, enamel and filigree." \*

I remember visiting BU during my college search a few years ago, and let me tell you, no tour guide of mine ever told me about the college's on-campus clean and cool thrift store, Howie Mack. Defying the connotations usually associated with the phrase "thrift store" (heaps of clothing purged from someone's closet circa 1985, and not the cool 1985), Howie Mack is neat and actually has clothes you and your friends would wear. Shirts hang across the well-organized wall, and in the middle of the store is a plethora of jeans: Seven, Diesel, Lucky, Calvin Klein, Express, and Gap denims, to name a few, all priced at \$20 and under. Howie Mack "is a resale, retail clothing boutique," says owner Howard Porter. "We sell current styles. Gotta be in really good shape. It's geared strictly towards casual, young adults," he adds. "This isn't business casual stuff. It's just cool clothes." And where do all these clothes come from? Well, from you, actually. "It comes from the neighborhood and the kids that go to BU," says Porter. And anyone can drop off their worn, but not too worn, still-in-style clothes. "We pay cash for everything," says Porter." \*

However you call it, vintage/used clothing/thrift/consignment stores offer up unbeatable deals on unique and inimitable items. So next time you have a bit of energy, time and requisite patience, and are willing to forage through piles and piles of junk to find that perfect shirt, jacket, or pair of pants, give one of these Boston locales a shot. There is nothing like the feeling of satisfaction in something self-earned, especially when it comes to the unrivaled form of self-expression that is clothing. ☺

\* All information in quotation marks was taken from online reviews ([www.bostonphoenix.com](http://www.bostonphoenix.com), [www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com))

# A Lone Star Showdown

BY EVANS CLINCHY

If I really tried, I could probably write an entire book on what's wrong with the format of the NBA playoffs. For one thing, the playoffs take two months from start to finish, leaving all but the most diehard of fans with the temptation to lose interest. For another, so many teams make the playoffs that squads with *losing* records actually manage to sneak into the postseason. And furthermore, the 16-team format means that some teams have their playoff spot sealed weeks or even months in advance, rendering much of the regular season irrelevant.

The NBA playoffs have always had their problems. But prior to the opening tipoff of last season, they only got worse. The recent introduction of the three-division format in each conference—with Atlantic, Central and Southeast divisions in the East and Southwest, Northwest and Pacific in the West—turned out not only to be pointless, but also to put a serious damper on the Western Conference playoffs, ruining what could have been an unforgettable series in the 2006 conference finals.

The San Antonio Spurs and the Dallas Mavericks this season have been two of the best teams the West has seen in recent memory. Both teams won 60 games in the regular season, both have shut down opposing offenses all year long, and both are led by outstanding coaches—the Spurs by accomplished veteran Gregg Popovich and the Mavs by up-and-coming rookie Avery Johnson. If you ask me, any true basketball fan would long for a thrilling showdown in the Western Conference Finals between the conference's two heavyweights.

Instead, the conference title is likely to be all but decided in the next couple of weeks, as both the Spurs and Mavs, in all likelihood, should meet in the second round of the playoffs. And if you ask me, the winner of that series should carry its momentum straight into a victory parade back home in Texas, come mid-June. Either the Spurs will cement their place as one of the game's great dynasties, with their third title in four years and fourth in the last eight,

or the Mavericks make history by finally winning their first championship.

The Spurs' first round opponents, the Sacramento Kings, just don't have the firepower to make it out of San Antonio. Their leading scorer, point guard Mike Bibby, will run into a pair of San Antonio guards, Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili, who should easily shut Bibby down offensively. Tim Duncan will have no trouble taking on Brad Miller in the paint, and the Kings will simply be out-muscled in the series.

Meanwhile the Mavs have been relegated to the four-seed in the West playoffs, thanks to the NBA's brilliant idea of giving undeserving division winners the top three spots in each conference. However, the Mavericks are easily among the top three teams in the entire NBA, and in the

## A Texas duel will decide who represents the West in the Finals

first round against the Memphis Grizzlies, there's no doubt that they'll play like it. The Mavs-Grizz series will feature a battle between two of the conference's best power forwards, in Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki and Memphis' Pau Gasol. And unfortunately for the Grizzlies, Pau Gasol is a poor man's Dirk Nowitzki. Dirk is bigger, stronger, more athletic, and a more reliable shooter, and he's bound to carry the Mavs into the next round. A supporting cast of Jason Terry, Jerry Stackhouse and Josh Howard won't hurt either.

Of the other four teams in the West playoffs, the Phoenix Suns probably have the best chance of stopping the Texan titans. The Suns' aggressive offense, led by Steve Nash at the point and Shawn Marion inside, has been wearing down opposing defenses all year, and they'll likely continue their winning ways in their first-round matchup with the Los Angeles Lakers. Of course, the Lakers have the one and only Kobe Bryant, but Nash and rising star Raja Bell have what it takes to contain Kobe somewhat, and somewhat is

enough—the Lakers are a one-man team, and that one man can't outscore the Suns without a superhuman effort. Bell is a dazzling three-point shooter, Marion is one of the game's best forwards, and Nash will have no trouble getting around the defense of opposing point guard Smush Parker.

Look for the Suns to stay in Los Angeles for the next round, as their next opponent could very well be the LA Clippers. The Clippers have gotten an impressive season out of star power forward Elton Brand, and at thirty-six Sam Cassell remains a solid point guard. Former Duke teammates Brand and Corey Maggette, reunited as Clippers forwards, will match up with Nuggets superstar Carmelo Anthony and fellow forward Kenyon Martin. It's an interesting matchup, but it's one where the Clippers will prevail. Denver has been lacking defensively this season, and in the playoffs, it will show. The Nuggets are the higher seed, but that's only because of the weakness of the Northwest Division. The Clippers are the better team.

Now call me crazy, but I might go so far as to call the ensuing Suns-Clippers series irrelevant. If you must know, I'm picking the Suns, because in the end, I don't think LA's guards—Cassell and Cuttino Mobley—can contain Nash and Bell. But regardless, the winner of the Spurs-Mavericks series is the one that counts, and that is arguably the toughest series of the postseason to call.

The Spurs and Mavericks are both great teams—there's no doubt about it. But in the end, it may all come down to experience, and Duncan, Parker and Ginobili have all been here before. Although Dallas will surely put up a fight, it's hard not to pick San Antonio for a repeat performance this June, and I see no reason to resist my temptation. It's a close call, but in the end, here's the prediction. The Spurs will make it out of the first two rounds, down the Steve Nash and the Suns in five, and edge their familiar foe the Detroit Pistons to win the NBA Finals in a 2005 Finals rematch. Turn on your TV and watch the NBA playoffs in 2006—but only if you don't mind watching a rerun. ☉



# The Beasts of the East

BY SARINA MATHAI

Doesn't LeBron James make you wonder what you're doing with your life? The guy is 21-years-old and in his NBA playoff debut, he goes out and records a triple-double. No 21-year-old without a college degree should be making \$90-million-plus in Nike endorsements and recording 32 points, 11 rebounds, and 11 assists in their first playoff game ever.

Am I bitter at the fact that at this point of my life, my entire bank account is worth less than the "ice" around James's neck? Perhaps. I am more in awe of what James has accomplished in his career than anything. There were questions of whether James had what it took to play well in this type of atmosphere. We all knew he had the pure physical prowess and athleticism to do anything on the court, but did he have "it"? The "it" factor that transcended Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson to an otherworldly stratosphere in the National Basketball Association? Could he take it up to that level?

Even though it has been only one game, the answer to the question is not nearly as cloudy as it was before. Now the only question in my mind is how scary will LeBron James be in a couple of more years? He has only gotten a taste of playoff action. Imagine what he'll do when he finally is comfortable with the high-stakes pressure situation and has the experience that the analysts love bringing up whenever they discuss playoff teams. It is literally frightening to think of what he is capable of doing.

When it comes down to it, however, the Cleveland Cavaliers still have a weak supporting cast which was supposed to feature the scoring threat of Larry Hughes. However, Hughes has been banged up the entire year and only scored two points in 27 minutes on a 1-9 shooting night against the Wizards on Saturday. Ouch.

The rest of the supporting cast has their strengths, but not one of them can be seen as a second option to LeBron. The player who scored the second-highest number of points for the Cavs was Donyell Marshall off the bench who scored 19. If

the Washington Wizards can miraculously keep James in check, there is really no one else on the roster who can take over the game. Luckily for Washington, they have a much more balanced team than the Cavs and have multiple scoring threats in the form of Gilbert Arenas, Antwan Jamison, and sometimes Caron Butler.

Not surprisingly, LeBron James will hold the key to this series. If he can play like he did in the first game, LeBron can pull an '89 Michael Jordan and single-handedly advance his team to the next round. If not, the Cavs will have to wait until next season and make improvement to their roster so James can lead a more championship-caliber team.

Speaking of a championship-caliber team in the east, what team comes to mind other than the Detroit Pistons? The Pistons have been anxiously licking their lips for some real competitive basketball after basically cruising through the entire NBA regular season. To be honest, the sub-.500 Milwaukee Bucks, even with all their young talent, are not exactly the competition that Detroit is looking for, but it will do until they can get the chance to face teams on their level.

Don't feel bad for the Bucks because this playoff series is their chance to give guys like T.J. Ford and Andrew Bogut playoff experience. If the Bucks want to make this series interesting, they need Michael Redd to redeem himself for his horrible outing in which he scored only 11 points on 4-15 shooting on Sunday.

Well, things can't go well for Detroit all the time: the ankle injury to Richard Hamilton should be a cause of slight concern. Let it be noted that this injury would be the first one to hit the Pistons core group of guys in three seasons. Detroit fans should hope that this injury won't get aggravated as the playoffs go along for Hamilton is definitely a guy they will need to reclaim the championship they won in 2004.

The only other team in the Eastern Conference that has a chance of making it to the Finals or even winning it all is the Miami Heat, who beat another .500 team in the Chicago Bulls, 111-106 on Saturday

night. The Bulls, unlike the Bucks, gave the Heat all that they could handle. Ben Gordon scored 35 points and shot 50-percent beyond the arc. Andres Nocioni added 18 points and 16 rebounds and Kirk Hinrich added 19 points of his own along with eight assists. In the end, there was just too much Dwayne Wade. Wade scored 30 points, 14 in the fourth quarter alone, and had 11 assists. Shaquille O'Neal reminded people that he still exists and is still the bastion of the Heat's game plan with his night of 26 points, 16 rebounds, and five blocked shots.

Maybe the Heat will wake up in the playoffs and start playing the basketball that they were capable of the entire season. The duo of Wade and O'Neal will be a serious threat to any team and you can never forget that their roster includes Antoine Walker, Jason Williams, Gary Payton, and James Posey. If they finally learn how to all work together and play smooth basketball, they will make some noise this year.

Many experts believe that the New Jersey Nets, who enjoyed a late season revival, might have the chance to advance far in the playoffs. Sure, the win by the Indianapolis Pacers on Sunday could have been an aberration, but the Nets have yet to fully impress me as a team. This Pacers team is not the Pacers team of the past couple of seasons. They sometimes look so physically and mentally worn down that you wonder what their fate might have been like if the entire Ron Artest fiasco hadn't occurred. Yet, on paper the team is actually quite talented. Jermaine O'Neal seems to be back in form averaging over 20 points per game this season and just under eight rebounds. They still have Stephen Jackson and the dangerous Peja Stojakovic as well as players like Austin Croshere, Jeff Foster and Fred Jones, who were all on the Pacers team that nearly made it to the NBA finals. Look for the Pacers to pull the upset.

When it all boils down, one of two teams will be left standing: the Detroit Pistons or the Miami Heat. I'll put my money on the team that won over 60 games this season. Look for the Pistons to reach their third consecutive NBA Finals. ☉

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