



Flaws in Azoulay's breakdown

I am writing to take issue with Professor Azoulay's guest column "Kerry Assumes Ignorance." I was so struck by the flawed and deceptive nature of her arguments, that I felt compelled to write my first letter to the editor. In an attempt to paint Kerry as prejudiced and condescending, Azoulay first attacked the prefatory and parenthetical comment he made before answering a question on Africa that his wife was from Mozambique and had been forced to leave. Azoulay dove into a lengthy yet utterly hazy description of the Mozambique revolution and then blasted Kerry for supposedly assuming that nobody in the room would know as much about the situation as Azoulay apparently did.

The problem with her argument was that 1) it was not an argument; it was a history lesson. 2) The history lesson was constructed

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in such a way as to highlight insignificant points (i.e. the fact that a Mozambique liberation leader married Nelson Mandela) over far more important points (such as Kerry's wife's fantastic inherited wealth and status among the Portuguese colonial elites). 3) The argument/history lesson addressed only the preamble to a response and not the response itself—thus making no attempt to connect this apparent incongruity on Kerry's behalf to a logical doubt voters might consequently have in Kerry's ability to adequately serve Africa's needs. And 4) the argument/history lesson

missed the point that even if Kerry's wife was in fact an evil oppressor of black Africans, the simple fact that she originates from Africa means that for Kerry, Africa is more than just a place on a map that he can ignore. It is a place he can ignore only if he wants to get in a fight with his wife.

Azoulay then attacked Kerry for his response to her question concerning Charlie Rangel's (D-NY) proposal for a national draft. After spending a paragraph characterizing Rangel as a right-minded war veteran concerned only with the class issues at play in the armed services, she blasted Kerry for racializing the issue through his comments on the unfairness of forcing a higher proportion of people from "South Central, Detroit and Harlem" into war through the draft as opposed to Americans from other areas who were able to get deferments. In doing so, she hinted that Kerry's points were elitist and racist.

The problem with Azoulay's breakdown of Kerry's response is twofold. 1) She described Rangel's proposal of a national draft only in socio-economic terms. She failed to acknowledge that because Rangel is a black man who represents Harlem, his calls for socio-economic justice must at least in part be viewed in racial terms. 2) She described Kerry's response only in racial terms. She neglected to acknowledge that when he references South Central, Detroit and Harlem he is citing places that are both predominantly black and predominantly poor. Thus, he did not as she claimed try to "evade" the economic issue at hand in an elitist fashion. Clearly, poor Americans everywhere have gotten the shaft in all editions of our nation's draft, but to hint that Kerry's response on this issue was elitist and vaguely racist is consciously deceptive and in any case wrong.

Lastly, the tone of the column was unnecessarily vituperative and ultimately unintentionally self-satirizing.

Azoulay repeatedly made note of her distaste for people who assume their audience is uninformed, but devoted more than a third of her column to lengthy explanations of recent historical events and the background of a prominent American politician. Either she believes that we Grinnellians understand the issues at hand or she believes we don't. Regardless, by hollering her barely supported arguments at us, she made it clear that she believes that we are unable to differentiate between what is logical and what is just loud.

—Nicholas Lloyd '04

Baechtel will Geneva Initiative be missed

I was saddened to read on GrinnellPlans.com this week that Professor Mark Baechtel will not be returning to Grinnell next fall. Not only is he a wonderful professor and a great guy, he was the best writing instructor I ever had the pleasure of studying with. I understand that the professional life of higher education faculty is very uncertain until they receive tenure, but I believe Grinnell students are going to lose out with Professor Baechtel's departure. Best of luck to you, Professor Baechtel! You will leave some big shoes to fill.

—David Nathan '01

Kerry clarification

As the leader of Grinnell Students for Kerry, my normal response upon seeing letters to the editor that attack Senator Kerry is to respond in kind. The letter that Grant Woodard and I wrote defending Senator Kerry from an inaccurate attack by the Dean campaign seemed to provoke quite a reaction in the last issue of the S&B. Grant and I were just trying to truthfully outline the differences between Kerry's liberalism and Dean's conservatism but, to paraphrase Harry Truman, "we told the truth and the Dean campaign thought it was hell." The campaign was so offended by our letter that one of the leaders of Students for Dean, Sechyi Laiu, published a letter in the S&B attacking Senator Kerry. Only is his attack was that Kerry was "a liberal" and "the candidate of the NAACP." Sechyi's "attack" on Sen. Kerry is accurate. John Kerry is liberal. John Kerry is "the candidate of the NAACP." In fact, I would hope that any Democratic candidate would have the support of the oldest and most important civil rights organization in the United States. Maybe Sechyi thinks that being supported by the NAACP is negative. Maybe Sechyi thinks that there is something wrong with being a liberal. I don't. But if he wishes to continue to advertise John Kerry as the liberal candidate of the NAACP, he should let me know. I'll be more than glad to spread the word.

—Ben Jacobs '06



Speedbump Man

trabajaba

adam beals

you've probably heard, RKO Speedprez pulls down a cool \$480,000 a year, and his various endorsement deals and PGA tour winnings push this figure to nearly \$90 million. These earnings may seem exorbitant, however, it's important to keep in mind that the college pays me a biweekly sum of \$25 just to produce incoherent columns that nobody reads. When I'm good and lush, I can compose a column in about 5 minutes which sets my wages at \$300 per hour. My parents encouraged me to use this money to payoff my student loans, but I opted to spend half on bling and go swimming in the rest Scrooge McDuck-style.

When I'm not backstroking through my benjamins, I like to give back to the community by serving at Salvation Army kitchens. When I was home over Thanksgiving break slopping gruel, I looked up into the tattooed eyeballs of a large young man with orange hair and nails protruding from either side of his nose—not fingernail nails, pound-into-wood (not flesh) with a hammer nails. Certain that this man was going to kill me and swipe my diamond encrusted dollar sign necklace, I scanned the room for a more benign-looking big guy who I could hide behind. As I was looking around frantically I noticed Speedbump Man patiently wait-

It takes a certain amount of girth to make an effective speedbump

I can usually handle unpleasant news concerning international politics with a decent amount of detachment and dispassionate objectivity, but I was absolutely infuriated at this week's presentation and widespread international acceptance of the "Geneva Initiative," a recently drafted Middle East "peace" plan. The co-authors are Yossi Beilin, an Israeli leftist peacenik politician, and Yasser Abed Rabbo, the ex-Minister of Propaganda for the PLO. Although the document ostensibly calls for an end to terrorism and the relinquishing of the "right of return" by the Palestinians, it goes on to focus mainly on both legitimizing "Palestinian" terrorism and anti-Semitism and delegitimizing the moral argument for the creation and continued existence of Israel. More specifically, the document legitimizes anti-Semitism when it calls for the dismantling of Jewish settlements in "Palestinian" territories, thus implying that being Jewish on a certain piece of land is somehow a provocation, let alone the fact that one province of the West Bank, Judea, is the region from which Judaism derives its name. Arabs who live in Israel do not need a security fence to protect them because, unlike in the "Palestinian" territories, in

Israel extremist bigotry either—Jewish or Arab—is discouraged and punished severely by the government. The very fact that Israel is a Western-style secular democracy in the middle of a resentful Muslim world places the entire Jewish people in an extremely uncomfortable position. Both the Christian West and the Muslim East hate the Jews for creating and maintaining a political entity that defies traditional Christian and Muslim stereotypes of the Jew as weak and ineffectual. Further, it challenges an entire worldview wherein East and West are clearly distinguishable entities, free from the psychological and intellectual complications inherent in the existence of a Jewish state that is "Western" in structure and "Eastern" in spirit and tradition. Furthermore, militant Islam views Israel not as a legitimate, independent state like any other, but as the main imperialist outpost of a US-led West trying to dominate and humiliate the Muslim world. Any call whatsoever—like that of former President Jimmy Carter this week—for Israeli concessions to the "Palestinians" emboldens those who wish to view America as the façade of power which they evinced it to be in the rubble of its tallest towers on 9/11. This warning is crucial for the survival and interest of not only America, but also of the one billion-plus Muslims who need to formulate a collective identity based not upon rejection of "the other," but imbued with the sense of spiritual and socio-economic self-dependence that will empower them to say "NO!" to the dictators and instigators who relentlessly call them to a jihad for "Palestine." As a final note, I have placed the terms "Palestine" and "Palestinian(s)" in quotations in order to identify the fact that the Arabs/Muslims do not define their collective identity at the level of the nation-states that were imposed on them when the British Empire drew lines in the sand following World War I (the name "Palestine" and the "Palestinian" flag were decided upon by the British Imperial War Office).

—Alex Muller '06

ing in line for his dollop of gruel. Speedbump Man is a beloved public figure whose mission in life is to stumble around blind corners and fall on his face. When someone who's walking too fast or talking on a cell phone comes around the same corner, Speedbump Man chills them out by tripping them with his moaning body. It takes a certain amount of girth to make an effective speedbump, the kind of girth that can only come from consuming a few healthy servings of gruel. When I realized that the orange hair guy, who could afford both hair dye AND a pair of nails, was going to be taking food from Speedbump Man, my fear sparked into rage. I looked orange hair guy right in his tattooed eyes, took a deep breath, and timidly gave him the rest of

gruel. I looked over and saw salty tears swelling in Speedbump Man's eyes, but, hey, I didn't want a pair of nails protruding from either side of MY nose!

There are times, during the long winter nights, when I feel pretty ashamed that I gave Speedbump man's Thanksgiving dinner to a hulking man-ape who was probably a corporate lawyer just looking for a free meal. Sometimes I feel so guilty that all I can do is fire up my clap-on fireplace and pass the night admiring how the dancing flames reflect off my 40-carat diamond ring.

Letters to: The Editor

In Defense of Dan

Since I first arrived Grinnell College, I have been proud to be a part of such a tolerant and open-minded community. However, in recent weeks, my confidence in this community has been slowly undermined and finally shattered. I am writing here because I believe this is an issue that impacts the entire campus community. In the name of self-righteousness and indignation, we have committed a hypocrisy by wronging one of our own in the same way we accuse him of wronging us.

Dan Grossberg has been my friend from the time he arrived at this institution. I neither agree with all of his lifestyle decisions nor do I mean to say that he is entirely blameless in what has happened.

[P]eople who have never ... bothered to discuss with their concerns with Dan himself, have used this satirical article as a pretext for levying personal assaults against him.

However, in no way have his actions merited the kinds of outrageous rumors that have been debasing him. I personally witnessed the first, and only, instance of harassment ever reported against him and though he may have been out of line, his actions in no way constituted harassment, nor were they sexual, nor was he ever forced to leave any school as a result of any sexual offense. Indeed, Dan, together with our ad-

ministration, has actively sought to discuss grievances others have had with him, but no one has come forward.

Due to Dan's forward personality, many people, myself included, have at some time felt ill at ease around him. Though this is unintentional on his part, when the slightest rumor of sketchiness is added, it is not difficult to see how people's perceptions could be altered and how the escalation of such misperceptions could, with time, lead to completely baseless accusations. Dan would never wish to cause dis-

comfort and upon being asked, he has always been willing to accommodate other people even to the extent of discontinuing any kind of interaction with them. In this respect, I am appalled by the countless attacks our community has leveled against Dan as a result of his recent article in the B&S. It is clear to me that people who have never, in accordance with our policy of self-governance, bothered to discuss their concerns with Dan himself, have used this satirical article as a pretext for levying personal assaults against him.

Mr. McGranahan's editorial in the latest issue of the S&B is a prime example of such an attack. He suggests that Dan's article is "indicative of a threat to the security of our community." I fail to see how an article poking fun at its own author could be responsible for such a serious offense. Indeed, if Mr. McGranahan were concerned about the impact of satire on the security of our community, why didn't he express concern about the article in the same issue written by Mr. Hamfeld about "Grinnellians taking other Grinnellians from behind and bludgeoning them in the back of the skull at the point of climax to heighten their own sensation?" Also, Mr. McGranahan, who claims to be "an advocate of self-governance," had never made any effort whatsoever to discuss with Dan the "concerns of fellow community members" until this article was released.

In all fairness, Mr. McGranahan's article was by far kinder than the personal e-mails many have been sending to Dan. The result is that we are making Dan extremely uncomfortable in every area of the school, an effect that is not dissimilar to that of the harassment of which Dan is so often accused. I wonder, if "a representative of the community" and very many members thereof think such behavior is acceptable, do our ideals of tolerance and self-governance have any value whatsoever?

—Matthew Phelps '05

supported by Andrew Maginniss '05 and Laura Riddle-Ford '04

Propogating rumors

Well, if the fifth principle of self-governance leaves Grinnellians "responsible for addressing situations and communicating concerns about issues that undermine community or individual rights," then I too have a concern to voice. In Devan McGranahan's letter to the S&B, he voiced his offense at Dan Grossberg's satirical article in the B&S. I believe that someone certainly has a right to make fun of himself and well-known rumors in a satirical newspaper. And while he also has the right to do so, I find it offensive that Mr. McGranahan would write a letter to the editor that is nothing more than a personal attack on a member of the Grinnell community. While I commend Mr. McGranahan for talking to Dan before writing his letter, I find it

rather disturbing that he failed to comment on what Dan said: "the harassment stemming from the rumors has at times been unbearable." Why did this statement not incite Mr. McGranahan as much as a self-deprecating article about familiar rumors? Dan's article said nothing new; his explanation to Mr. McGranahan *did*, but rather than speak to the college community about the effects of rumors on one of our own, Mr. McGranahan just continued the libel. First of all, if someone finds Dan's behavior inappropriate, tell *him*, not Mr. McGranahan, not the S&B, not someone who has no control over the situation. After all, we're all mature college students and I think everyone here can handle mature discussions about acceptable behavior. Furthermore, it seems that this situation has escalated to the point that a mere acknowledgment from Dan sends girls running. I'm sure someone will point out to me a case where I'm wrong and I acknowledge that it is certainly possible, but I think that most of the complaints about Dan stem from the fact that he's known as "Sketchy Dan," and not from any true harassment. If Dan were a threat to his fellow students, Grinnell would certainly not allow him to remain and it's a shame that in this "welcoming" environment he has to put up with offensive rumors and harassment. Yes, I have heard these rumors too, but I have also spent time (alone, heaven forbid!) with Dan, which I obviously wouldn't have done if I felt uncomfortable around him. I understand that other girls may have had different experiences with him and I don't intend to undermine someone's feelings, but too often the rumors I hear are repeated by people who know nothing about Dan except the stories they've heard from others. Why can't we just judge for ourselves or better yet, not judge at all? This is Grinnell and we should be open-minded individuals, not propagators of hateful rumors. Finally, Mr. McGranahan wrote that he felt "Mr. Grossberg's flippant attitude toward the concerns of fellow community members is appallingly callous and blatantly disrespectful and represents a poor attempt at resolving any issues between himself and those of us who may find offense in both his words and his actions." I don't perceive Dan's attitude as "flippant" when he mentioned unbearable harassment. Nor do I feel that it is his responsibility to relieve the concerns of his fellow students when he is the object of harassment and slander. Despite my disagreement with Mr. McGranahan's letter, I agree partially with one of his final comments: "I believe the article only increases the alienation between Mr. Grossberg and a concerned, rumor-addled student body." Mr. McGranahan's letter to the S&B certainly increases the alienation between Dan and a student body that is not concerned enough to do anything more than propagate rumors.

—Cathy Geddes '06

Senators: quantity down, quality up

liz allan, sga president

guest column

On Wednesday, Student Government will run campus-wide voting for student initiatives and constitutional reform. The initiative votes are a means of voicing mass student opinion on campus concerns. The constitutional amendment proposes a means of dramatically increasing Joint Board dynamics and effectiveness. Both are a critical part of self-governance and student representation.

For those new to this, the voting procedure is simple: Log onto Blackboard.Grinnell.edu using your NT username and password and find the link to vote under "SGA-Election" (under the organizations list). You will be forwarded to an online survey with a multiple-choice ballot. Complete the ballot (feel free to leave items blank as you wish) and log out—it takes no more than a few minutes.

You will see eight student initiatives on the ballot. These are non-binding and should be self-explanatory. In order to pass, an initiative must receive two-thirds approval with at least 50 percent of the campus voting. If an initiative passes, I take it to the appropriate office or committee for further action.

The other item on the ballot is a constitutional reform that restructures and condenses the body of senators. I'm writing this to encourage you to vote "yes" for the reform. Here's why:

Right now, each hall has at least one senator. There are two for larger halls, two for students in campus-owned houses and three for students who live elsewhere in town. Every Wednesday at Joint Board, all senators meet with cabinet members to discuss SGA activities and wider campus issues. We gained four senators this year with the addition of east campus, bringing our total to 27. I feel that Joint Board has become unmanageably large—to the point where we cannot have productive discussion. I want to reduce the overall size of the body to facilitate conversation about critical campus issues in the coming se-

mester.

More importantly, a reduction in senators increases the individual senators' investment in SGA. Students seem less and less interested in serving as SGA senators. I don't blame them. Joint Board conflicts with *The West Wing*, which certainly presents much more exciting weekly political drama. Aside from that, Grinnellians are busy people who care deeply but don't have time to register a formal opinion every week. As a result, senator elections are often uncontested or entirely unattended and students-at-large have almost no choice in their student government representation. For first-semester students, student staff and others who can't do the job themselves (for whatever reason), this is particularly frustrating.

Under the proposed constitutional amendment, senators work in "teams" of two to three per each RLC cluster, with an additional team for all students not living in residence halls. The reform reduces the overall number of senators from 27 to 17.

The proposed change does not diminish the quality of your representation. While senators will be responsible for more than one building, your senators will still live relatively close by and thus can respond to local concerns. Because they will work in teams, senators can divide up responsibilities and call hall council meetings, distribute information more efficiently. The reduction in numbers increases competition for positions. Tougher elections mean that candidates will put more energy into convincing constituents to vote for them. Voters, in turn, have a real choice between candidates.

In short: Quantity down, quality up. Your senator will have an easier job with help from co-senator(s), you will feel confident in casting a vote for representation and I will have a smaller and perhaps chattier Joint Board.

Joint Board conflicts with *The West Wing*, which certainly presents much more exciting weekly political drama.

I hope that students do not feel disenfranchised by this measure. SGA remains as open as ever to student input—in fact, I'm looking now for students who are interested in serving on a student self-governance committee beginning in January (shameless plug: e-mail me about it). I just want to channel input differently and clean up representation. Joint Board meetings are open to the public (Wednesday 7:30 North Lounge). With this reform and other Joint Board changes in place, maybe more students-at-large will feel comfortable attending and joining in on the conversation.

No system is perfect, but I think we have done a good job of refining this one to be as strong as possible. For instance, a new provision in the bylaws provides senator campaign funding. And just in case it doesn't work out, a sunset clause allows Joint Board to revoke the changes next fall. Joint Board overwhelmingly favors the amendment: Last week, 23 senators voted for the reform and only two opposed it. This week, only one opposed.

I hope that you feel similarly confident in voting for this change. In case you have questions, I can be reached at [sgaprez]. I will be in my office (Forum lower level) today from noon until about 4:30 and on Monday from 1-3 to talk with individual students.

By positioning the change midyear, I can ensure smooth adjustment to the new system. Campus issues inevitably intensify in the spring semester; making the reform now prepares us to improve Joint Board and constituency dynamics just in time to deal with major issues. In other words, this is the perfect time for the student community to improve its role in campus decision-making. I urge you to vote (and vote "yes") on Wednesday.



Misdirected environmental guilt

Two for the price of one

At least before the beginning of this semester, I knew when to feel guilty. I could be sure that when I accidentally printed off more copies than I needed or did not rinse out and recycle a milk carton or drove to some location that I could have easily walked to, I was harming Mother Earth. With this feeling of being at fault would also come opportunities to redeem myself through some grand tree-planting act or another and thus lessen the guilt.

I signed up to take Economics 240 because, while not a particularly outspoken and radical activist, I aim to be aware of environmental concerns. And do my part to make the world a safer, healthier, happier place. And understand the basics of the environmentalist movement. Or at least I did until recently. As an assignment for that class, I'm writing this guest column to share with fellow Grinnellians the challenges I have faced since my enrollment in the course "Resource and Environmental Economics."

In elementary school we were taught that recycling-ness is practically next to godliness. And my family always recycled at home—it was simply part of the weekly schedule. Now, my parents are wrong? Just when I was starting to trust and believe them again? Articles like "Recycling is Garbage" posit that recycling isn't efficient enough to justify the energy that the process requires and that landfills aren't actually filling up too quickly. So, I'm hurting nature if I don't waste paper?

What ends up being the sketchiest about my condition of confusion is that currently, whatever I do, I can somehow turn it into a valid choice. If I choose to recycle a cardboard cereal box, then I am of course doing the right thing for my environment. But, if I throw my old box in the trash, I am consciously not contributing to the worthless and cost ineffective cycle of breaking down the box into pulp and then forming it into a new box and I am inducing businesses to plant more trees. I always get to win!

Except that I am having a hard time reconciling what intrinsically feels right with the information that we're currently learning in class. For example, sometimes I worry about being just another over-consuming and over-indulged American teenager. Case in point: In the past year, I have had four distinct bedrooms: one at my mom's house, one at dad's, a cabin at my summer camp and a college dorm room. And in each room I have had: a bed to myself, plenty of clothes, some sort of storage unit for said clothes, lots of shoes, several books, a lamp, extra junk food, a stereo, more random toiletry items than I know what to do with and approximately 479 other odd things that I could easily throw away without affecting my quality of life in the slightest. Yet I still shop at the mall on the weekends. This must be wrong, right? A reason to feel guilty, yes? I have more than my fair share, you see?

But no. In class we read articles (like "Why Greens Should Love Trade" from the 10/7/99 Economist) that argue, essentially, we should increase our trading with and buying from third world countries. The only way to help poverty-stricken people in the developing world is to buy more of their products, not less. And, "[T]rade generally benefits the environment ... it boosts growth. As people get richer, they want a cleaner environment—and they acquire the means to pay for it". This is counter-intuitive to my reasoning that I should limit my spending habits in order to boycott sweatshops and reduce my impact on the planet.

Apparently, this is what college will do to you. Warp your brain, confuse your certainties and question your beliefs. This must be a good thing, otherwise the professors wouldn't do it, true? But I'd like to caution others that if you decide to take Economics 240, be prepared to doubt yourself. It's an environmental jungle out there and you don't even know the half of it, yet.

—Laura Mason-Marshall '06

Everyone knows that first-year college students get lost on campus during their first semester at school. It's even easy to become disoriented in the dining hall, waffling between the lines for the chicken parmesan and the build-your-own burrito, or apprehensively scanning the lunch tables, hoping for a familiar face across from whom to set your tray. But who ever heard of an 18-year-old kid getting lost between reading assignments?

It takes a special combination of sardonically conflicting syllabi for that to happen. But it happened to me, a poor, intellectually-adrift first-year at Grinnell College. You see, two classes I am taking this semester both deal with the environment: my first-year tutorial "Decline and Renewal in the Heartland" and "Resource and Environmental Economics." The perspectives, from which the classes are taught, could not differ more starkly. It is often hard for me to reconcile the prescriptions each gives for dealing with environmental problems.

The environmental problems pertinent to the focus of my tutorial are mainly those caused by agriculture—and to some extent industry—in the Midwest. The focus of my economics class is broader, but certainly inclusive of these problems. For the latter class, I read part of the book *Free Market Environmentalism*, by Terry Anderson and Donald Leal, a text that expounds the basic economic approach to righting environmental wrongs. Anderson and Leal would charge that environmental problems are bound to arise from agriculture and industry when firms (in this case farmers and manufacturers), and those buying their products, have no incentive to prevent the problems. Since everyone is naturally self-interested, no one who benefits from a market transaction (be they the seller or the buyer) will attempt to fix any external problems arising from that transaction unless doing so also benefits him or her.

The solution, then, is to internalize the problems into the market. Somehow, the stakes should be changed so that the creators of the problem have reason to remedy it. Up to this point, there is little conflict between the perspective of my tutorial and that of my economics class. But at this point they diverge. Anderson's and Leal's way of internalizing an environmental problem is to assign ownership to the land or environmental good that is being squandered. A classic example of such a solution is the establishment of property rights on grazing land on the nineteenth century American frontier, which the authors describe in detail. In the mid-1800s, there was enough pastureland to go around. Ranchers claimed grazing rights by simply keeping their herds consistently on an appropriately-sized piece of land; newcomers knew to look elsewhere for a place to graze their livestock. But by the 1870s, as more and more settlers moved west, the sheep and cattle populations had become more concentrated. There was less land to look for "elsewhere," so the newcomers would infringe on pastures previously claimed by other ranchers. Without legal title to the land, the original ranchers could do very little to keep the new settlers' herds away. In the big picture, the problem that resulted was environmentally devastating overgrazing: since the government owned the land, and anybody could legally use it, ranchers had nothing to lose and everything to gain from grazing as many livestock as they could, consuming as much grass as possible before someone else's animals ate it. Land would be grazed down to the dirt, which would be blown or washed away without protective grass roots, undermining its potential productivity. For the individual rancher this meant that the size of his herd was being dramatically reduced. Ranchers organized themselves, in self interest, to create avenues for legal private ownership of land, so that their profits could be preserved. Once laws were changed and property rights began to be assigned to western lands, the practice of overgrazing was greatly diminished because ranchers could, with the aid of barbed wire and the courts, restrict other ranchers' access to their

pastures. They could then comfortably graze their livestock at a rate that would ensure a healthy level of grass growth, on which their successful operations depended.

While economists like Anderson and Leal want to harness self interest to deal with environmental problems, environmentalists of the type we read in my tutorial hope to make people less self-interested. In Aldo Leopold's essay "The Land Ethic," the famous Midwest conservationist writes about what he sees as the need for people to develop their personal ethical codes to include the land and the environment. He describes an ethic generally, as "the tendency of interdependent individuals or groups to evolve modes of co-operation," and goes on to illustrate what ethics people already have: "The first ethics dealt with the relation between individuals..." And, "later accretions dealt with the relation between the individual and society." However, Leopold says that the development of ethics has not gone far enough: "There is as yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it. ... The extension of ethics to this third element in human environment is, if I read the evidence correctly, an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity."

What Aldo Leopold argues—and he is probably right—is that the environment would be better cared for if everyone had a "land ethic," even within systems of property rights. But most likely, the conservationist's method of environmental protection is not better than the economist's, and vice versa. As Leopold points out, "One basic weakness in a conservation system based wholly on economic motives is that most members of the land community have no economic value." For this reason, among others, property rights can be difficult to assign and enforce satisfactorily. In these cases, a "land ethic" may be a good substitute. Alternatively, while I think it is a brilliant idea to try to instill a land ethic in people, it is a formidable task. To revise society's attitude toward the land would take a long time, and to trust solely in humanity's environmental goodwill, however heightened it may become, would be dangerous indeed. A property rights system and an expanding land ethic can coexist, each helping in its own way to protect the environment.

Just as the first-year who is daunted by the dining hall eventually learns, through experience, that it is not necessary to choose between the chicken parmesan and the build-your-own burrito (those plates are big enough for both!), I have experienced the wonder of a liberal arts education. Rather than continually clashing and confusing me, my tutorial and economics class complement one another, helping me to look at environmental problems in a way I would not have been able to, had I only taken one of them.

—Ben King '07

Just as the first-year who is daunted by the dining hall eventually learns ... that it is not necessary to choose between the chicken parmesan and the build-your-own burrito (those plates are big enough for both!), I have experienced the wonder of a liberal arts education.



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elisa lenssen

traveler's check

Excuse me while I push cards, limits

I just wrote a long complaint letter to the Halifax bank corporation. But it wasn't satisfying. I'm not sure you can really understand just how *unsatisfying* it was. The writing process went far more quickly than any Grinnell paper I've ever written and yet even writing a 25-pager made due the Monday after Thanksgiving by a professor who has a 70 page paper due the day before the final exam and makes you get up at 3 a.m. to observe how the night air makes your 10 pound textbook glimmer would be more satisfying than this. Far more.

So this past Sunday, I'm withdrawing money from a cash machine about a block from where my flat is. Somehow, my card (First Federal, Grinnell, Iowa ... actually previously, one British salesperson exclaimed how horrible a bank called First Funeral was. At the time I jollily corrected her, but now it seems the genuine omen of a ghastly debacle. Give me S&M Bank, Hells' Fargo ...) gets stuck: one half inside the machine, one half dangling dastardly out of my reach yet in my sight. I send my companion off to get tweezers. In the meanwhile, this horrible *not* precious meanwhile, a British man behind me with a shiny messenger bag and greasy hair proceeds to inspect the situation, ignore my explanations and take his bank card and jam my bank card all the way in. He pushed my card in! He lost my card! He did not help! He hurt! He ruined! Can you imagine just how excruciating this experience was? Imagine observing an old woman push your jaguar off a cliff: you're so stunned that such an ac-

tion could take place, you can't adequately respond. To this smarmy Samaritan, I think I managed a garbled "oh, that's great" before I slipped into bamboozled British complacency and politeness and just commented "hmm" and "oh dear" as he pattered about putting on a show of concern before pedaling off on his bike with his card safe and sound in search of another queue. "Q" stands for quagmire. The tweezers arrived, but it was too late. I was harried and the one man situation remained: no money, no cash, no successful Samaritans, just god-awful ones.

And the bank people proved to be a hostile plague of biblical proportions. But first, I saved myself from fear and indulged in shopping sin. Losing your money source makes you do weird things. For instance, two hours after losing my card, I paid money to shop for clothes. Not to buy clothes, just to look at them. Wandering around in a random neighborhood (after once again being foiled by a closed system (museum closed)), I came upon an absurd mecca of collegiate hipsters. One alleyway, about the length of the south loggia, teemed with hipsters who seemed to have no inkling how ridiculous this mass compression of creased jeans, scarves, sour expressions and insanely flammable hair was. It was a hideous hipster happening. Maybe yes, I am overdoing the hipster thing. I did overdo it. Hipster hipster hipster. Likely overdone due to the fact that my left hip felt lighter than normal as the crisp shining green ATM card that usually

lived there was STUCK IN SOME SLOT, forced there by SOME SHITTY SAMARITAN. Bygones. Buy gones! Then I bought a hat. And then beer. And when my friend was stiffed at the cash register, I did a little jig. Though not really, because at that time the jig was just about up.

The bank wouldn't give me my card back. They held it up so I could gaze at it through the glass. But it was just

bitter bait. The bank wouldn't give me my card back. They assumed I was a criminal. They cut it up. They said the machine was never faulty. Two hours later I walked past said machine and it was flashing an "out of service" sign. Yep. Happy days, happy days. I called Iowa. (My bank there, actually, although being able to call Iowa might be effective. Like, say, calling the white

house). A lovely woman named Joy answered and spent two hours investigating, but turns out no new card until I can come in and sign a paper in person. So, no cash until the end of January. That was my last tie to Grinnell. A wad of savings unwound. Until then, it's fasting and disheveling and living on a budget the size of my professional marketability and current interest in academia or the future. What have I learned studying abroad and writing this column? We are all our own angry, unreliable, unsound disappointed/disappointing narrators. It's funny—the column sometimes—but more the fact that though Grinnell's nicer than London, really the end result is the same. Delirious improvisation and an endearing/enduring audience. Go.

And the bank people proved to be a hostile plague of biblical proportions.



daniel musgrave

i know things good

Freaky wild rabid animal monkey-love sex and you

You know, I'm still looking like a bloated tick from that holiday we just had. My brain is currently occupied just trying to motivate my stomach to continue digesting. In lieu of this fact, I'm going to skip the usual witty banter and just get down to business.

Dear Doctor Love, What is it about Kansas People that is so damn sexy? I just can't comprehend how that state pumps out such stunning individuals. Isn't Kansas just a flat state composed of a cornfield and a tornado? That's what I've heard and I don't know whether to believe it or not.

*Crapfully yours,
-its bigger in texas.*

ps. paint-balling rules! BOOYA!

Mr. Texas, I assume by "its" you're talking about my reputation and fan club. Either that or you're referring to the number that corresponds to the temperature. About

Kansas people, it's something in the water. A hardy dose of hotness potion in the water plus a steady diet of Kansas beef and some good old fashioned family values makes for a state full of sweet people (and by sweet I mean totally awesome). With regards to paint-balling, it rules! You are correct, sir. More of it should happen around Grinnell. C'mon you guys, the paint is non-toxic and biodegradable, give it a chance.

Dearest poopikins, How do you do freaky wild rabid animal monkey-love sex? I think I tried once but failed.

-A troubled lover

To the Lady that thinks I am her poopikins: Hey, how's it goin'? My name's actually Mr. Right, but I heard you've been looking for me anyway. So, you want to know how to perform a manoeuvre so complex it was left out of the Karma Sutra? They had to stuff it into another book titled "The Dictionary," perhaps you've heard of it. I'll give you the inside scoop and show you how to get it done the goodest.

First you're going to need to get some supplies. It re-

quires some soothing background music, maybe Barry White or the Sisqo cd; rose petals, one of those big coin banks shaped like a crayon, some ninja stars (because ninjas are freakin' awesome), three pounds of modeling clay, one lemur (if you can't get a pair) and a Crocodile Nile slip n' slide. Oh and you'll need a partner too, preferably of the same species. All of these items are essential to the success of pulling off freaky wild rabid animal monkey-love sex.

Now, if you'd like to know the rest of the secret, you'll need to buy my handy instructional video "Freaky Wild Rabid Animal Monkey-Love Sex and You (GONE WILD!): This is not porn. No really." If you get the DVD, it comes with 37 seconds of never-before-seen footage. It also comes with a surprise ending where Neo grows a pair and beats those damn dirty robots like a red headed stepchild. These quality items can be found at amazon.com for only \$49.95. Or for all you bargain hunters, they're also on amazon.pygmytribe/_lostinthefrainforest.co.uk for just three shiny beads, a magic rock and a shrunken head equaling roughly \$1.62.

The Sledge

Well, I'm sure that we will all be happy to use Outlook next semester. Another example of our newly-unified campus.



Cowles and Quad go head-to-head

Christena McIntyre asked 203 people at Quad and Ben Weyl asked 100 people at Cowles the following question this week:

Webmail or Outlook?

— Quad —

51%

Webmail

49%

Outlook

— Cowles —

53%

Webmail

47%

Outlook



Glad you asked

Dondurma, or Turkish ice cream, is made from tapicoa and must be eaten with a knife and fork.

According to Erin Anderson, Dondurma lifts cars in competitions.

random rants

Students speak out about what's on their minds in 142 words, and you're invited! If you have a random rant, email it to me at anderseb@grinnell.edu. After all, complaining in a public forum is always more fun than doing it alone.

Terrorists end a golden era

Oh the days when things were fun. What has happened to this campus? Why does everything here suck when compared to the golden era of our first few years? Why, we remember back when we could have fun all through the day and all through the night, when we would have "bad time" good times and then there were just the plain old "good time" good times. But now, all that has changed. Things just aren't as enjoyable as they used to be. Parties were definitely more fun before and we distinctly remember the dining hall food being much more fun. Don't even talk about the lack of any attractive people.

Perhaps it is the slow but inexorable deterioration of the human condition, perhaps it is the Second Law of Thermodynamics, perhaps it is the terrorists, but things used to be way better.

—Jason Arends '01, Carl Damerow '02, and James Soliah '02

Flu shot shortage

I bet you are all bracing yourselves for the winter. One of the things most of you have done is getting a flu shot. Like most students, I went to the Health Center hoping to get my flu shot. Unfortunately, the Health Center staff told me that the flu vaccines ran out last week! The reason, I was told, was because "the college ordered 850 shots." Given that there are about 1,350 students at Grinnell, why would anyone go on to order 850 flu shots, knowing perfectly well that they won't be ample? Why? It's sad that some of us now have to face the winter ill prepared. I envisage that whoever is responsible for ordering flu shots will not reiterate the same mistake next year. I hope and pray I will survive this winter, this first one in my life.

—Trymore Magomana '07

Petite girl speaks her mind

For those who follow the schlock that is printed in the random rants, in the S&B's previous issue Dan Grossberg responded to a rant I had written, but erroneously addressed me as Dale Mackey. In response I, the stalwart defender of modern morals that I am, have taken it upon myself to defend the innocent reputation of Ms. Mackey, and to counter any claims that we are, in fact, the same person. Now, when you see some poorly executed article in these pages with my byline, please do not go and harass Ms. Mackey about the contents. When Ms. Mackey executes a laudable performance in some theater production, please do not congratulate me. And, to that one guy, yes I do wanna go out with you, but you must realize that I am not the petite demure girl you had once thought.

—Brendan Mackie '07