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The

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Cover: The Valley Library Clocktower at sunset. Photo by Stuart McKim.



The Chronicle

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From Two Editors: Behind the Scenes at

Jenny & Douglas: This is a transitional year for The Chronicle, as Jenny Moser prepares to graduate and leave this magazine in the editorial hands of Douglas Van Bossuyt. To mark the transition and offer a peek behind-the-scenes, the two of us thought we'd share the process that took one story from first submitted draft to final edition.

Douglas: I submitted a travel story detailing one particularly interesting night in Tunisia. My first draft contained a sentence which read, in part, "and the little cafe run by a man and his Downs-Syndrome plagued assistant closed for the night." I wrote the sentence with a specific grammatical structure and pattern in mind. No thought was given to how someone might read the sentence. My only concern was to craft an engaging narrative in my own voice.

Jenny: We began our usual round-robin editing process, in which both editors and Eric (our faculty advisor) read each piece, suggest changes, and comment on the changes suggested by the other readers. I loved Douglas' piece, but when I read that sentence, I knew immediately, "That has to go." I didn't think Douglas had meant to be offensive, but I know that careless words can hurt as much as intentional ones. Issues of disability and handicap are important to me, and I wasn't willing to let stand the implication that Down Syndrome is a "plague" rather than an occasional fact of life. I suggested changing it to "a man and his assistant, who had Down Syndrome, closed ..."

Douglas: The edited sentence jumped right out at me when I reviewed the story. As an editor, I didn't feel the sentence structure fit with or carried the same voice as the rest of the piece. As a writer, I didn't understand why the change had been made. In my mind I hadn't associated any negative connotations with the original wording. I assumed it was a purely stylistic change. I decided to revert to the original grammatical structure.

Jenny: The undone change, as the sentence returned to "... his Down's Syndrome-inflicted assistant ..." jumped right out at ME. Annoyed, I saw only my concern for the content of the piece, and "inflicted" seemed little better than "plagued." The stylistic issue didn't occur to me. I wrote a firmly worded e-mail explaining my reasons and announcing that the changes I'd made would be final. I sent it off and waited to see what Douglas had to say.

Douglas: When I received Jenny's e-mail I was mad at first. I felt, as a writer, that my creative rights had been infringed upon and due process had taken a back seat to draconian editing practices. My mind was blind to Jenny's concerns. As I was writing a nasty-gram telling Jenny where she could put her political correctness, my mother told me to come eat breakfast. After the meal, I reread Jenny's e-mail and, thinking as an editor, recognized her concerns as more than just extreme political correctness. I rewrote my reply as an editor rather than a disgruntled author. Instead of insisting on a potentially offensive adjective, I suggested that we find a non-offensive alternative. I listed a couple of alternatives including "afflicted" and "challenged." I also suggested that we could use this dispute as an opportunity to inform our readers of the Chronicle's inner workings.

Jenny: When I received Douglas' fairly worded reply, I felt ashamed of myself, seeing that my new co-editor was more willing to compromise than I was. Understanding his motivation for the first time, I concentrated on trying to find a way to balance my concern for content with his writing style. I considered Douglas' suggestions, but neither seemed to hit the value-neutral tone I wanted. When I thought of "affected," it seemed like an obvious solution. I wrote an e-mail proposing the change and asking Douglas how he wanted to go about co-writing this piece. He responded, "I can dig it," affirming my solution, and suggested we write in alternating paragraphs. I'm glad we did. It's helped me understand both sides of that editorial drama and reminded me that, while I edit, I must remember to see my work from the writer's point of view.

Jenny & Douglas: In the end the story was published in a form acceptable to the writer and editors. It can be read on page 5. We at the Chronicle highly value all participants in the process – from writer to editor to reader. Often, we don't mention our readers, but you are the most important part of the equation. We write and edit for you. The Chronicle welcomes feedback of any kind. Please send all comments, good or bad, to: University Honors College, Oregon State University, 229 Strand Hall, Corvallis, OR 97331-2221.

Globalization and the Role of the United States

It is evident that as developed countries are rapidly improving the quantity and quality of national infrastructure, many lesser developed countries demonstrate that existing infrastructure is unable to sustain the increase of population in urban areas, while development of public works in rural areas is often left out of national budgets. This global concern played a significant role in my choice to study Civil Engineering. I had envisioned myself designing water drainage systems in Latin America, to combine my engineering education with my love of travel and Spanish fluency. However, the pressure of finding a steady, well-paying job right after college pushed this aspiration to the back of my mind.

Freshman year at Oregon State passed, rather uneventfully, save the self-guided tours through the abandoned Weatherford Hall, full of paintings and Pink Floyd lyrics; McNary Hall's brutal Sock Assassin game; and, of course, "ChemSkill Builder" assignments. I decided to take an abrupt leap of faith, and jetted to Spain to study engineering at the Universidad de Cantabria during sophomore year.

My eyes were perpetually wide, as I adore the thrill of meeting people who graciously accepted me into their homes to experience a day or two of their customs and linguistic idiosyncrasies. Of course, there was a certain degree of debauchery with the infamous Erasmus crowd (European university exchange program), and we would rotate hosting dinner parties in our apartments to immerse ourselves in diverse cultures and good cheer.

I was restless upon returning, but bided my time working with Hoffman Construction in the summer, and gritted my teeth through 21 credits in the fall of '04. Rather unexpectedly, a scholarship/research opportunity arose, and I set my sights on the American University of Bulgaria in Blagoevgrad for the winter and spring of '05, after which I would stay to help coordinate a political science research grant through the National Science Foundation on the topic: *The Role of Science and Scientists in Policy-Making*. Although I have greatly benefited from these two experiences abroad during my sophomore and junior years, I had to reevaluate my goals for the Civil Engineering degree, and decided to put off living abroad until my degree

was finished.

This year, a new opportunity for travel related to my major has been brought to my attention through the organization Engineers Without Borders. While abroad in Spain, I contacted the Portland chapter, but was unaware that Oregon State was starting a chapter of its own. Every new chapter must struggle with defining leaders' roles, but despite this, Oregon State has taken on a project in El Naranjito, El Salvador for this coming year. Based on an application for the project by a Peace Corps Volunteer, we will likely design a water transport system from source springs to a couple of villages. We will make preliminary trips to assess the situation, and to receive feedback from the community as they express their observations and needs. The first trip is planned for spring break of 2006, and subsequent trips will be

sometime in the summer of this year and again during the following winter break.

Last September, there was a regional conference for Engineers Without Borders in Seattle, and a few of us from Oregon State attended lectures in which we gained valuable tools through lessons learned by other groups

who have completed projects all over the world. It's so encouraging to see the level of participation in this organization, which has completed around 50 projects in 30 different developing countries since starting in 2001. Within our chapter at OSU, we look for interested students from any department, because it takes many disciplines to pull together this project.

The United States is one of the world's most developed countries, and it is imperative that we put our excessive wealth to good use by giving our time and using our skills to help where there is need. Globalization requires developing the infrastructure in lesser developed countries, so as to reduce disease and increase opportunities for education. Our time is our most precious commodity, and we must learn to allocate it more wisely.

"...it is imperative that we put our excessive weath to good use by giving our time and using our skills to help..."

For more information about Engineers Without Borders please visit <http://www.ewb-usa.org> and <http://groups.engr.oregonstate.edu/ewb/>. For volunteer opportunities, project information, meeting times, and membership requests, please email ewb_osu@yahoo.com.

Night Bus to Tunis

By Douglas Van Bossuyt

I arrived at the main bus and louage (shared long distance taxi) depot in Kasserine at dusk. All of the louages had already left for the night. The nearest hotel, the prison-like youth hostel, was over three kilometers away and the local taxis looked hungry. I asked a man at the station if there were any more buses that night. In fact, there was one bus that would depart in two or three hours, and for, of all places, Tunis! I decided to take this bus.



I settled down for a several-hour wait outside the bus station in Kasserine. The stars came out, some soldiers arrived to wait for the bus and the little café, run by a man and his Down Syndrome-affected assistant, closed for the night. At about 10 p.m., one of the men sitting next to me asked for the time in Tunisian Arabic. I was wearing a little black skull cap that I bought in Tunis to keep my ears warm. We soon struck up a conversation that carried on for a good 30 minutes until the bus showed up.

As we were getting ready to get on the bus he said (in Arabic) “So... You aren’t from Tunisia, are you? I know! You’re Algerian!” I said, much to his utter astonishment “No, I’m not Algerian.” He then said “I know! You must be Libyan!” to which I responded, “No, I’m not Libyan.” Quite confused, he asked, “So if you aren’t Algerian and you aren’t Libyan, what are you? You speak Tunisian Arabic with an accent so you can’t be from Tunisia.” I replied, “I’m American.” He looked at me, blinked, and didn’t say another word. His brain couldn’t process what I had just told him. I was an American, I spoke Arabic, and I was boarding a night bus near the Algerian border bound for the capital of Tunisia. He sat in the front of the bus and got off after a few stops. I never saw him again. I sat in the back of the bus with the soldiers on their way to Tunis. I paid my fare, settled into my seat, pulled my cap down over my eyes, and drifted off to sleep to the reassuring roar of the diesel bus engine.

Around 1 a.m., I briefly regained consciousness to realize that we were entering Le Kef. I didn’t realize that the bus ran through Le Kef. Instead of making the straight shot to Tunis, we got a scenic night tour of Tunisia along the Algerian border. I drifted back to sleep.

Something was jabbing my face. What was all that noise? Light suddenly flooded into my vision as my cap was pulled up above my eyes. I couldn’t make anything out. Someone was shouting at me. There was a cold piece of round grey metal poking my forehead. My eyes began to focus. I could see a muzzle. I could hear Arabic. I could make out a large clip, a finger, and a trigger. There was a man shouting at me. He sounded very cross. The world finally came back into focus. An overzealous National Guard officer had a fully loaded AK-47 pointed squarely between my eyes, his finger was on the trigger, and was shouting at me in Arabic, something along the lines of “Okay, you Algerian scum! Show us your papers or your head will go missing!”

I fished a photocopy of my passport out of my left pocket and handed it to the officer. He stormed off the bus after collecting identification from a few other passengers. Several minutes later he came back on and asked very politely, in French, for my original passport. I handed him my passport
Continued on page 9...



An Honors College Look at the

by Stuart McKim



As an Electrical and Computer Engineering student I had been looking forward to the opening of the Kelley Engineering Center since I applied to OSU. After all, a great new building specifically for my school sounded great. The amazing architecture that unfolded throughout the last year especially caught my eye as I walked by it each day. Surprisingly, for all the work that was put into the building, there are only a couple of classrooms and seminar rooms in the entire

building. Most of the building is occupied by offices and graduate research labs, which is a little bit of a disappointment to me as an undergraduate.

There are, however, plenty of great features that make Kelley better than any of the other engineering buildings. First, of all the engineering buildings, it is closest to the heart of campus. This makes it more convenient for studying between classes since I am more likely to be nearby. Also, there are actually tables and chairs on the main floor so that groups can get together -- in an



engineering building -- and study. Finally, the architecture is beautiful. Although I have to wonder how much money was spent on art in and around the building, it does go well with style of the building itself. Unlike many other modern buildings, Kelley fits with even the oldest buildings on campus, yet at the same time is distinctly modern. The sleek aluminum, glass and brick exterior is repeated indoors with the addition of light wood panelling. Everything goes together well, as it should, which makes the "KEC" a very nice building indeed.





Photography for the KEC spread by Stuart McKim



Stuart McKim is a second year Electrical and Computer Engineering student with a passion for photography, bicycling, backpacking, and electronics. He became seriously interested in photography about four years ago, with special interest in nature photography. Most of his photographic work has been while backpacking. The Kelley Engineering Center project was a bit different, but the varied aspects of the building made for a surprisingly intriguing project.

Stuart enjoys Oregon State and the Honors College, especially the move from Southern California to beautiful Corvallis. He also likes the challenge of the engineering curriculum: the more thinking required the better.

“Beyond Free Will: An Empirical Case for a Capacity Model of Human Agency”

A Thesis Summary by Erik Helzer

Although the question of free will has persisted throughout the history of philosophy as an important metaphysical consideration, rarely does the inquiry include empirical evidence from other disciplines concerned with human behavior. In this interdisciplinary paper, I combine the wisdom of psychologists, metaphysicians, and philosophers of science to comment on the problem.

Traditionally, psychologists have divided mental processing into two types: controlled and automatic. Automatic processing is mental activity that happens beyond conscious awareness and is, by

far, the predominant activity of the human mind. It is efficient in the sense that it can process vast amounts of data quickly and usefully, and it is essential to human functioning and the complex processing that successful adaptation requires. Controlled processing, on the other hand, is an evolutionary metaphenomenon that is considerably less efficient, but that affords us the experience of consciousness. The “high-order” duties of reasoning, planning, and decision-making, and more generally volitional, willful processing, have historically been viewed as the unique domain of conscious, controlled activity.

In my thesis, I show that this categorical approach to understanding mental activity is oversimplified. The

Continued on page 11...

Multiple Viewpoints of Academia

Two Different Opinions By One Author

By Jessica Varin

Position A:

The only fight I have ever gotten into at school occurred two weeks before I graduated from high school. That's right – no dodgeball disputes or exploding middle school drama. It was American government class that did me in. I choose to express a dissenting opinion and proceeded to get yelled at by another student for the next ten minutes. Absolutely zero facilitation by the instructor occurred as I sat with someone five inches from my face and wondered whether the next thing I said would cause this individual to throw punches.

Welcome to a hate-free zone. Someone has to step in.

The College Access and Opportunity Act of 2005 introduced in the House of Representatives creates a federally backed academic bill of rights. HR 609, Section 103 establishes policies that give students freedom to express personal, political, ideological, and religious beliefs without fear of being reprimanded.

Additionally, this bill ensures that students attending institutions of higher learning are:

1) “assured that the selection of speakers and allocation of funds for speakers, programs, and other student activities will utilize methods that promote intellectual pluralism and include diverse viewpoints”, and

2) “presented diverse approaches and dissenting sources and viewpoints within the instructional setting”

At Oregon State, I have seen professors express their enthusiasm via illegible math problems scrawled across the board, monologues on why you should switch to their field of study, and honest euphoria at the intricacies of language. Conversely, I have also seen professors whip into a frenzied monologue about topics completely unrelated to the course.

Why should some instructors use the classroom as a soapbox while others are silenced?

Thanking a student for pronouncing the word “nuclear” correctly would be considered a major affront in some academic environments and a sarcastic joke in others.

Position B:

When I first became interested in politics, I used to play a game called “guess the teacher’s political affiliation”. As I developed relationships with my instructors outside of class, I learned about an unspoken line that permeated our conversations. Until they knew me quite well, instructors were very careful not to share their opinions, ideas, or thoughts on topics deemed controversial.

That changed almost instantly when I hit the university level. Instructors who contributed to dialogue and challenged students’ ideas were one of the most marked differences between my high school and college courses.

Student Speech and Association Rights as stated in HR 609, Section 103 seeks to eliminate discrimination on the basis of ideological grounds in higher education.

While this is admirable, rarely are students openly chastised in the academic setting for having variant opinions.

My Introduction to International Relations class continually challenged ideas presented in readings and lectures. The unspoken law was: be prepared to substantiate. In other words, feel free to call Machiavelli crap, but know that another student or the professor will probably call you on it.

Intellectual pluralism cannot result from a government mandate. Instead, students and faculty must choose to respect and listen to individual viewpoints.

William Butler Yeats once said, “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

Is it more valuable for a student to hear every viewpoint or to explore one viewpoint thoroughly with the knowledge that others exist?

I cannot expect to learn from a lecture devoid of passion and replaced by a bulleted list of all possible viewpoints. I would rather hear a viewpoint I disagree with, argued with vigor and riddled with controversial statements to ponder.

Some might argue that such a one-sided situation limits free thought and open discourse. I expect more from my peers and more from myself. It is not

Both arguments are continued at the top of the facing page

In order to recognize and promote intellectual diversity, it is clear that the invisible line must be drawn. Without clear and consistent guidelines, academic institutions are not held accountable for exposing students to a spectrum of viewpoints.

Robert Frost once said, "Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence."

Short of an intellectual quota system, these provisions uphold the responsibility of higher education to develop individuals who seek to understand opposing viewpoints and create personal beliefs and ideas.

Education is an amazing thing. As students, we are obligated to participate in dialogue that furthers our understanding of others. We should expect no less from our institutions.

the place of the federal government to prevent group-think.

Education is an amazing thing. As students, we are obligated to participate in dialogue that furthers our understanding of others. We should expect no less from each other.

Editor's Note: The Chronicle is always challenging its contributors to come up with new and creative ideas for stories and articles. In past issues we've featured two-person opinion pieces. Jessica approached us with an opinion piece containing opposing viewpoints entirely written by herself. She challenged herself to take up both positions and write arguments defending each position. The Chronicle never was told which position Jessica really supports, so we leave that up to the reader to decide.

Adventures in Tunisia, continued from page 5

upside down, obscuring my nationality a few seconds longer. He grabbed the passport and stormed off the bus.

After about ten minutes a different, more senior officer came onto the bus and started handing back identification papers. Mine was the last. He said to me in broken French, "I'm so sorry for the inconvenience. There's been a mistake. We thought you were someone else. Please enjoy your stay in Tunisia." I put my passport away, pulled my skull cap down over my eyes and went back to sleep as the bus pulled away from the roadblock.

Something was jabbing my face. It was cold and felt like steel. What was all that noise? More light. Oh no. Not again. As I feared, I was once again staring down the barrel of a fully loaded AK-47 being pointed at my temple by yet another fine officer of the Tunisian National Guard. Again, he yelled at me in Arabic. This time it was something like, "Give me your papers you son of an Algerian whore! Wake up or die!" I handed him my passport straight off this time, not wanting to delay the bus any more than necessary. He snatched my passport and tromped off the bus.

Ten minutes later he came back on the bus, visibly shaken, and handed back my passport. He said to me in French, "I'm so sorry for the confusion. We mistook you for someone else. Please have a nice time in Tunisia." I looked out the window as we pulled away. Across the road a small 1970's-era Renault R4 pickup was pulled over to the side with three people standing outside in the glare of the headlights of a large National Guard Land Cruiser. A guardsman had a rifle trained on the little group while another radioed back to headquarters with a whole stack of papers spread out on top of the hood of the Land Cruiser. Stacked in the back of the pickup several dozen sheep waited quietly. It seems I wasn't the only one getting the full treatment that night. I drifted back to sleep.

I woke up with a start when the bus engine died. I pulled my cap up and peeked outside the window. A few small streaks of orange blazed across the sky. It was 4:30 a.m. I had no clue where we were. I asked one of the military men sitting near me for our location in Arabic. This was the first time I had spoken since I got on the bus. Never during the two incidents had I uttered a word. The man stared back at me, not comprehending his own mother tongue. I asked again. He continued to stare. I asked in French if he spoke Arabic. I asked in French again. He suddenly realized that, in fact, I spoke Arabic and that I was speaking to him. A broad grin broke out across his face as he told me "We're in Tunis at Bab Saadoun." I said thanks and told him good morning. I got off the bus and walked the four kilometers to my house as dawn broke over Tunis. It had been an eventful night.

Douglas spent the last year abroad. He lived for nine months in Tunis, Tunisia and three months in Karlsruhe, Germany. He speaks Arabic and German and a bit of French. Douglas thoroughly enjoyed his time abroad and can't wait to go again but is very happy to be back at OSU and in the Honors College.

Honors College Virtuosos

by Frances Kim

It moves people to dance and gives courage to soldiers marching in war. It inspires and brings joy, sorrow, and fear. This is the universal power of music and several people in the Honors College have, after years of practice, developed this mystical skill.

Lisa Bauer, a senior in microbiology with a minor in music, is one of these people. She started in second grade with piano, which she recommends because of the ease in visualizing music theory on the piano.

Having a strong foundation in theory, she was able to compete with flute at the state level within a year of starting lessons in high school. Lisa says, "Lessons are incredible. With the right teachers, the little things they know to say click."

Now she plays flute in the Corvallis-OSU Symphony Orchestra, where advanced and professional musicians from OSU and the community play together. She is also in the OSU Symphonic Wind Ensemble. Lisa finds that playing in a group is very different than playing individually. "As a group, you're listening to each other to produce something as a whole." Each person has to be concerned about time, tone, tune, dynamics, and the general style of the group itself.

With music and studies, she has learned to balance her time. Besides having the ability to produce music, being a musician has taught her from a young age to develop focus and a sense of responsibility. One gains "discipline and is held accountable to committing yourself to practice."

Matt Jager, a junior majoring in music production, is gaining recognition as part of the Sweater Club, a six-member band started at OSU. Already they've toured most of the western states and are going to release their second album, tentatively named, "The Collective Unconscious". This album will be centered on helping people become more aware of the American culture in relation to the world.

He wants people to think critically in ways that are outside perceptions set by society. For instance, by not restricting themselves to a genre, Matt hopes people will find a liking in Sweater Club beyond their favorite category of music. He wants people to "break genre bounds," and appreciate each piece individually. To him, music is a sort of freeing agent. Creativity is the limit and not the labels defined by society and he hopes that people will hear that from his music.

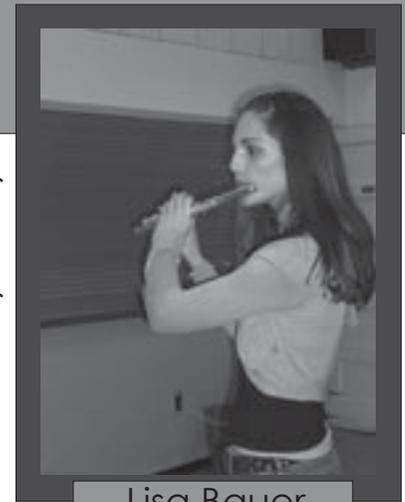
Matt himself has experienced such life-altering changes because of the influence of a band: the Rx Bandits. "They have a shift in thinking...they don't sing songs of puppy love and their lyrics cover meaningful ground." One message that hit Matt deeply was: "The best things in life are free. Experience and love are more important than the things you can buy."

He wants listeners to perceive the meanings in their own individual way. For this reason he tries to be lyrically ambiguous, avoiding specifics and leaving room for a variety of interpretations. "It means something different for me than someone else." When he writes music, he wants to express human life in a manner that is unrestricted and "free as possible".

Susan Puckett, a sophomore majoring in microbiology with a declared minor in music, is a clarinetist for the OSU Symphonic Wind Ensemble. She also started with piano in elementary school before beginning clarinet in the sixth grade. As she improved, she made it to All State in high school and earned the prestigious Semper Fidelis, given to one person for excellence in music per year per high school.

However, when she isn't performing in public, she is privately creating music for herself with the help of the GarageBand music recording program. She declined to reveal to the Chronicle her username for iCompositions.com, a site dedicated to sharing the creations of GarageBand virtuosos. In her words it is, "totally for fun. It's not for a class; it's not for anyone else. There are no criteria to follow. It's what I think sounds good."

She describes her creation as, "weird, wordless, ambient/mild techno." To create her songs, she builds off



Lisa Bauer

Continued on the back cover...

Painting by Numbers

Examining GPA Dependence

by Jessica Varin

"I'm pretty sure there's a lot more to life than being really, really good looking. And I plan on finding out what that is." -Derek Zoolander, "Zoolander"

We laugh at the pseudo-epiphany of Derek, an "aging" male model who no longer knows who he is. "Zoolander" is not a film worth harvesting for its literary themes. Yet, like the character it centers around, the film is a satirical commentary on how a pursuit can become meaningless.

One of the most common pursuits amongst my peers is achieving academic competence in our chosen areas. While this in itself is commendable, a common problem lies in our internalization of this goal.

4.0, 3.98, 3.2, 2.5, 79%, S, U: these letters and numbers are supposed to signify understanding and/or application of specific skill sets. So why do we let them define us? Why do so many of my insanely intelligent friends base their self worth on something so arbitrary?

An inherent flaw lies within this system that each of us subscribes to. We live for the moment of victory, trying to grasp the elusive curve or create a masterpiece. Many of us even convince ourselves that we will be somehow better people if we can accomplish everything we desire. But we won't be.

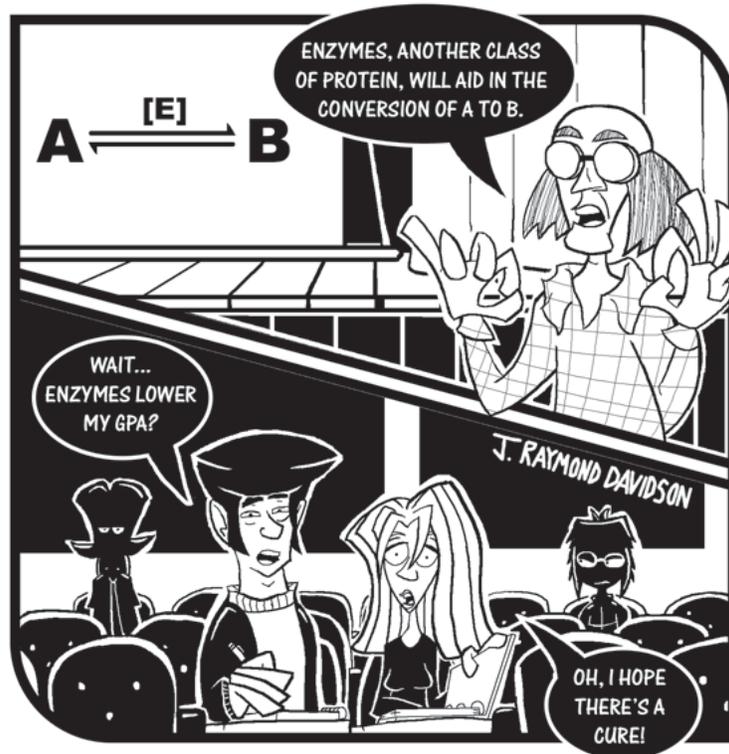
While having confidence in your own abilities is great, believing that you *are* the sum of your abilities doesn't lead to happiness.

In writing this article, I risk hypocrisy. I'm not immune to freaking out over the latest physics curve or cramming for finals. I will not apologize for the fact that I care about the numbers. In a world where numbers translate to opportunity, it's hard not to.

Yet no number can attest to the complexity of who I am.

Call it what you will – stick it to the man, screw the system, or just realize you're not 74% of a person. Knowing who you are will far exceed a flawless GPA or high MCAT score.

Sooner or later, each of us will look into the proverbial mirror. Does what we see fit into any numerical scheme? Seriously folks, take a page out of literary analysis. Seize the opportunity to look beyond the surface.



Helzer - Thesis summary, continued from page 7

most current research shows that automaticity is, in fact, at the root of all forms of controlled processing, and comes to the conscious arena wrapped with (and due to) pre-defined meaning and use. Once information reaches conscious processing, it is subjected to still more automatic processes that come as a function of the way our minds organize and apply information. The conscious experience, then, is one of awareness and not necessarily control.

I argue from this, and other, empirical psychological evidence that the concept of free will is an incoherent model for understanding the complex interrelatedness of human behavior. Indeed, if all processing of which we are aware is governed and selected by processing of which we have no awareness, the idea of free will amounts to little more than an oversimplified historical placeholder of human action. I suggest as a replacement a capacity model of human agency, which allows for active, but not free, agents. Important metaphysical concepts such as personal identity, control, and responsibility can be maintained under this new framework and are, in fact, superior insofar as they are rooted in an accurate description of human functioning.

of prearranged percussion loops, recording her own melody played on a midi keyboard.

She says music challenges her in “a good way. Not like classes that sometimes aren’t as fun...Music is more than memorizing things.”

And in that is the underlying reason why any musician continues to play. Susan says, “You can be creative and have expressions come through [with music].” Says Matt, “Writing and music are similar; both can convey emotion through symbols, except the symbols in music have no words.”

Being able to conduct emotion, music consoles the soul when life is less than pleasant. For Matt, “My favorite thing to do is sit on the beach with my guitar and play. If I have a really bad day, I go to the water front, have a chord pattern and sing.”

Lisa explains that the title of Beethoven’s sonata ‘Pathetique’ “means ‘touching, moving,’ which is precisely how it makes me feel.” The style of the piece, which is mainly “hard core and aggressive,” is a mix of that and the soft parts. Beethoven is known for such variation in his compositions in his attempt to surprise the crowd. She says she likes the song for that mix, “It goes along kind of nice and soft for a bit, and then all of the sudden shocks you with a loud, sudden ending.” Lisa compares music to a second language with which, “I’m able to express myself emotionally.”

This is how she lets go of frustrations. She says, “[Playing music] is a physical motion that expresses mood.” She says it is that connection between the body and mind that relieves stress.

Being a musician, knowing theories and techniques, or metaphorically, knowing the language, can help in expression and amplify emotions. However, one does not have to be a musician to love music. As Susan points out, “Look at how many people that are in the Facebook group ‘I’d die without music....seriously’. It just goes to show how important music is to people.

“It plays with your emotions, makes you feel things and experience things otherwise you couldn’t experience.”



Susan Puckett

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