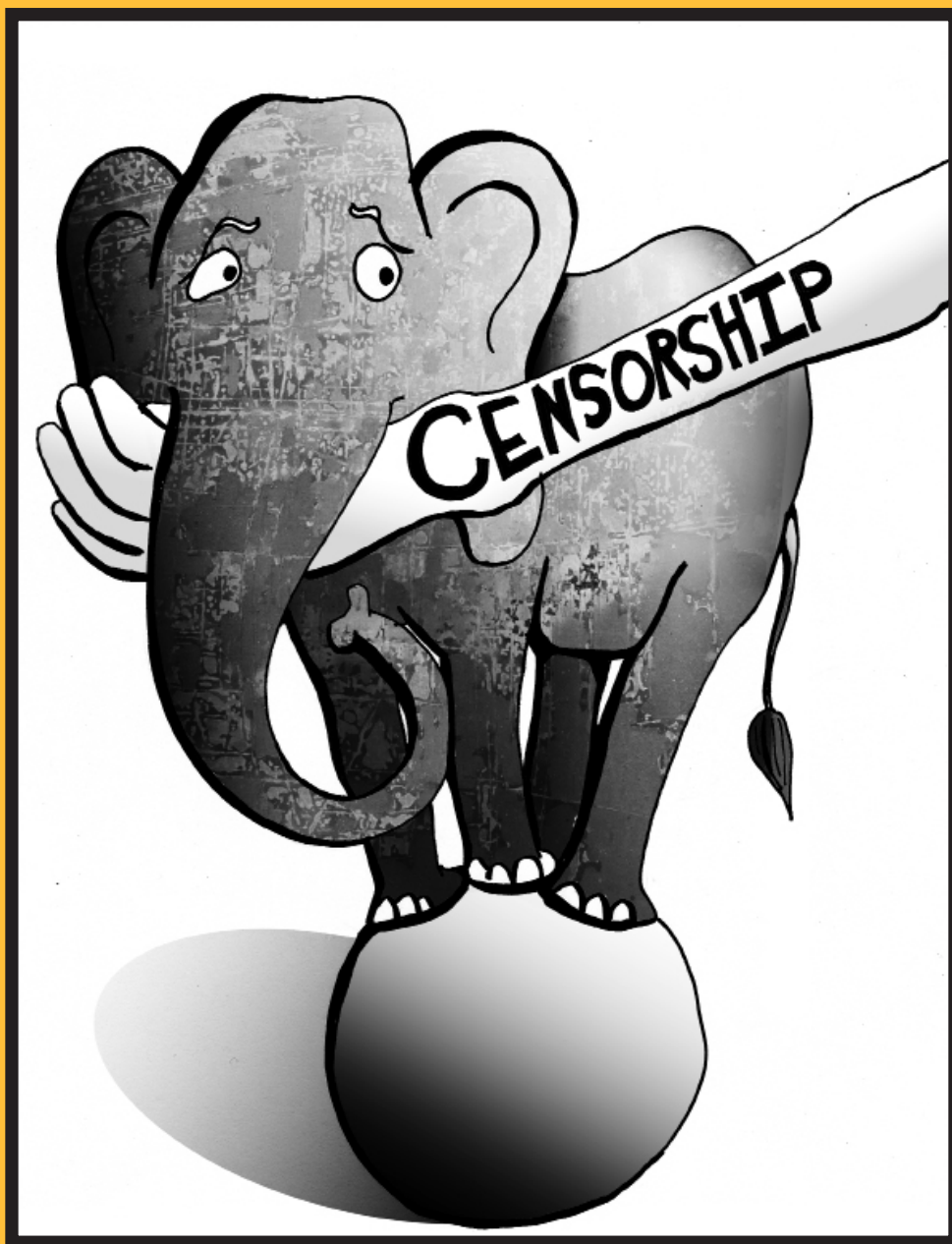


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Free Speech at Tufts

INSIDE: SYRIA ★ EGYPT ★ RUSSIA ★ FOREST FIRES

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THE PRIMARY SOURCE

VOL. XXIV • THE JOURNAL OF CONSERVATIVE THOUGHT AT TUFTS UNIVERSITY • NO. 10

DEPARTMENTS

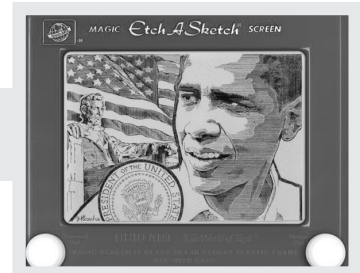
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Freedom from Censorship

Tufts University is on a list of the top twelve worst schools for free speech once again. The annual list is created by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), and takes into account many factors, including legal actions and policies put in place by the universities' administrations. In the 2006-2007 school year, the Source published two pieces that were censored by the University. The first was the infamous carol about affirmative action, and the second was a special section about Islamic Awareness Week. The administration responded to these pieces by charging the Source with harassment, rescinding our right to publish anonymous work, and threatening our budget. With the legal help of FIRE and the American Civil Liberties Union, we were able to appeal most of those restrictions, but the harassment charges still remain on record.

Most of the time when you hear about these incidents, it is in the context of the Source's poor conduct. Personally, I agree. The Source should not be used as a vehicle for racism or other forms of prejudice, no matter the motivation or intended effect. But the administration's conduct also left something to be desired. Tufts University has nearly unparalleled power in controlling the lives of its students: what we see, what we hear, what we say. The administration's reaction to the Source's misconduct revealed that they could not be fully trusted with this power. No media entity should be forced to rescind anonymity or have its funding threatened, merely because those in power do not like what the media has to say.

Going beyond this incident, Tufts University's record on free speech is not much better. In 2008, Tufts instituted a new speech code, which severely limited speech under the guise of preventing harassment. Administration policies such as bias incident reporting and BEAT Bias (now SPEAC) have also been used to limit speech on campus. Finally, the use of police forces and threats of expulsion to suppress university traditions

such as NQR reveal the power and brutality inherent in a coercive speech environment.

I agree with many advocates of anti-harassment policy that we should be able to live free of fear that we will be attacked or insulted based on our race, gender identity or presentation, religion, sexuality, or the host of other things that are inherent to our self-conceptions. But the way to achieve a tolerant and open campus is through education and social change, not through legal coercion. When the university administration is allowed to restrict one form of expression, that gives it the precedent to restrict other forms. That has been played out in many cases on FIRE's list: University of Cincinnati only allows free speech on one small area of its campus, where all demonstrations and petitions must take place; Michigan State University prohibits unsolicited emails sent to more than ten people; Johns Hopkins enforces a civility code that censors "uncivil, 'tasteless' and insufficiently 'serious' speech." We cannot allow speech restrictions of this magnitude to come to Tufts.

Sometimes it is necessary to check yourself, but speech monitoring should occur within the private domain, not as instituted by some outside body. To take a recent example, Sam Daniel's Daily op-ed on racism at Tufts has been the subject of much controversy. While this op-ed was also submitted to the Source, we chose not to print it, in an instance of self-monitoring. The Daily decided to publish Daniel, and they should not be punished for doing so. Students who disagree with Daniel also have the freedom to do so vocally, and students who feel harmed by his opinion can discuss why and seek resolution. But the administration has no place to interfere.

Good intentions created most of these speech policies. When we feel injured by some statement, it is easy to say that the statement 'shouldn't be allowed.' But when speech is restricted, we are all diminished. We must all work to promote freedom on campus, unbounded by university restrictions that can only result in silence.



THE JOURNAL OF CONSERVATIVE
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THE PRIMARY
SOURCE

APRIL, 2002

Ten years ago, the annual Issam M. Fares lecture was held featuring Bill Clinton for the first time. As always, Clinton talked about the Middle East, in particular the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is still going on ten years later. During Clinton's introduction, Fares talked about how Israel was an "international outlaw," refusing to obey the UN. In response, Clinton decided to change what he was going to say...

"Israel, said Clinton, was ready for peace. Israel offered Arafat all he could ever expect, and he turned it down. Clinton has good reason to be angry with Arafat—by refusing the offer, he denied Clinton his legacy as the man who could have brought lasting peace to the Israelis and Palestinians. Clinton also declared that if everyone who claimed to be Palestinian were allowed into Israel, Israel would cease to be Israel, but rather yet another Arab state."

- Tal Dibner, LA '02



10 Years Ago...



The SOURCE welcomes all letters to the editor. Please address all correspondence to TUFTSPrimarySource@gmail.com

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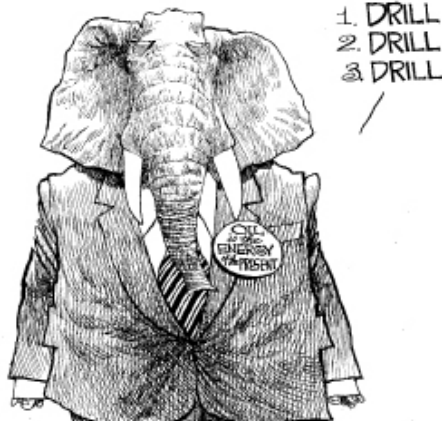


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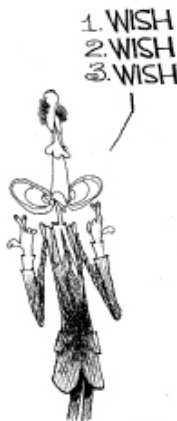


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articles.

Benedict Arnold: How Fat Women are Betrayed by Their Celebrity Icons" are popping up in academia in an attempt to add yet another layer to the cultural studies movement. Placing obesity in this realm of academia simply attempts to vindicate an unhealthy character trait most overweight people choose through their actions. According to the *Times*, "fat scholars believe they are serving justice and many hope that one day fat studies will be as ubiquitous on campus as Shakespeare." Embracing of obesity on an academic level simply perpetuates the notion that unhealthy habits are okay simply because many people make the same

Rather than modify fat in culture, governments, academia, health professionals and individuals ought to be aiming how best to create a culture that values health and allows life's luxury for those who make unhealthy choices. A 2006 Pew Poll shows that most Americans blame obesity on a lack of will power and exercise. While genetic and other scientific factors may play a role, it is obesity, most Americans realize that human self-control can contribute to decreasing obesity levels. Exercise, lowering the cost of healthy foods, prominent food labeling and greater awareness of calorie intake will allow people to make more informed decisions regarding their health.

That sort of action, rather than American lectures and softball advertisements against obesity are steps that just might lead more Americans to put down the fork and pay attention to their *Beid's* new resolutions for a healthy future.

Mr. Reid is a senior major in History.

in Articles, National | Permalink

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Age Group	U.S. should take action (%)	U.S. should not take action (%)
18-29	85	15
30-49	82	18
50-69	88	12
70+	92	8

Source: *U.S. Census Bureau*.

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issues and
covers, with
archives
going back to
1982.

† Past Issues



Source: *Author's calculations*.



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10

February 13, 2008
† Words from the Editor

† Words from the Editor



in Video | Formalize | Comments (1)

† Looking the Part

Editorial | February 13, 2008

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See web-only content, including exclusive video from our staff.

Comedy is allied to Justice.
—Aristophanes

PS *Money in the bank:* The United States Mega Millions just had the largest lottery jackpot ever - \$640 million. The nationwide lottery had participants from forty-two states, and Americans spent approximately \$1.5 billion on the lottery (or about double the prospective jackpot). There were three winning tickets sold, and the pot will be split between the ticket holders when they come forward. Lindsey Levitan, a professor at SUNY Stony Brook, took this opportunity to point out that the odds of winning the lottery are the same whether you buy a ticket or not – with a small margin of error. Congratulations to the winners on being part of that error!

PS *It's like the Oscars:* Vladimir Putin, flush with winning his election as president of Russia, has announced a new prize for everyday Russians: Best Worker. There will be a cash prize of over \$10,000 for the best welder, stonemason, electrician, miner and lorry driver in all of Russia. There will also be prizes for the top two runners-up. It's unclear what the criteria will be for winning, or why these particular professions were chosen. However, that didn't stop thousands of construction workers and other non-eligible blue-collar workers from trying to change careers as quickly as possible.

PS *Chickens are the environment's best friend:* Pince, a village in northern France, is planning to give every household not one, but two chickens. The chickens are meant to reduce bio-waste by eating food scraps, reducing environmental and city costs. Tufts Recycles is looking into adopting the program, but is running into trouble with Res Life. "It turns out that Yolanda King doesn't want the dorms filled with chicken sh-t," said one senior. "She's, like, so unreasonable."

PS *Important research abounds:* Scientists at the Snow and Avalanche Research Center in Davos, Switzerland, are beginning a new project that will prove vital to the world: finding out why ice cream gets all weird if you leave it in the freezer for too long. With assistance from Nestle, the

research center is taking a break from its normal, life-saving work on avalanches and snow safety. In other news, the Davos World Economic Forum has announced its topic for next year: whether those debit cards with your face on them are actually useful at all.

PS *Borat is still going strong:* A shooting competition in Kuwait ended in disaster for the gold medalist, a woman from Kazakhstan. When she stepped up onto the podium, the officials played the national anthem from Borat instead of the real one. Borat is banned in Kazakhstan, due to its offenses against the Kazakh people.

The actual excuse offered by the officials

was "we downloaded the wrong song from the internet."

PS *Technology is crazy:* The internet went wild last week over a youtube video depicting a man flying, unaided except for a pair of huge wings made out of canvas. Jarno Smeets claimed to have performed the feat using 'wii technology' which coordinated his arm movements with the wings. A few days later, however, Jarno Smeets was revealed to be filmmaker and animator Floris Kaayk, who faked the video. "I can't believe that many people bought it," said Kaayk. "Wii technology! For my next trick, I will run off a cliff and then several metres into thin air. Then, I'll have an anvil dropped on my head, to no effect except perhaps a few humorous stars or tiny birds orbiting my head."



Top 5 Reasons to watch *The Hunger Games*

- 1) Because you like popular things (that aren't Twilight).
- 2) Because you like to pretend that you are literate.
- 3) Because you want to learn how to survive after the apocalypse.
- 4) Because you haven't seen Battle Royale in a long time.
- 5) Because you like to see teenagers kill each other in violent ways.

PS Superhero immunity: A man in Montgomery County, Maryland, was pulled over by the cops for missing plates. He was driving a black Lamborghini with a Batman sign. Also he was dressed as Batman. The police have released a video of the incident where the man, identified as “Lenny” claims to be on his way to the local hospital to entertain some children. The video also features the traffic officer asking if he can take a photo with his fellow crimefighter, then singing the Batman song. Lenny was allowed to continue to the hospital without charge.

PS The case of the missing cat: Russian President Dmitry Medvedev’s cat went missing this past week, prompting a number of people on Twitter to create an account in Dorofei’s (the cat) name. Many of the tweets made fun of the nature of Medvedev’s political relationship with President-elect Vladimir Putin. When asked why he ran away, @KotDorofei responded, “It’s simple. I ran away from Medvedev because he promised to hand me over to Vladimir Putin. Help me hide!” Sadly, Dorofei was found a couple of hours later and was last seen trying to escape from Putin’s grasp.

From the Elephant’s Mouth

☞ *Just what we need:* Cornell’s David Harris has been announced as Tufts University’s next provost. Dr. Harris has a PhD in sociology, and his studies focus on race and ethnicity. Classes he has taught at Cornell include: Race and Policy, Research Seminar in Race and Ethnicity, The Demography of Race, Racial and Ethnic Identity, Introduction to Social Inequality, Elementary Statistics, Race, Class, and Social Policy. The provost is the senior academic administrator at Tufts. If you thought that “Many Stories, One Community” was solid academic programming, then get ready for a lot more of it.

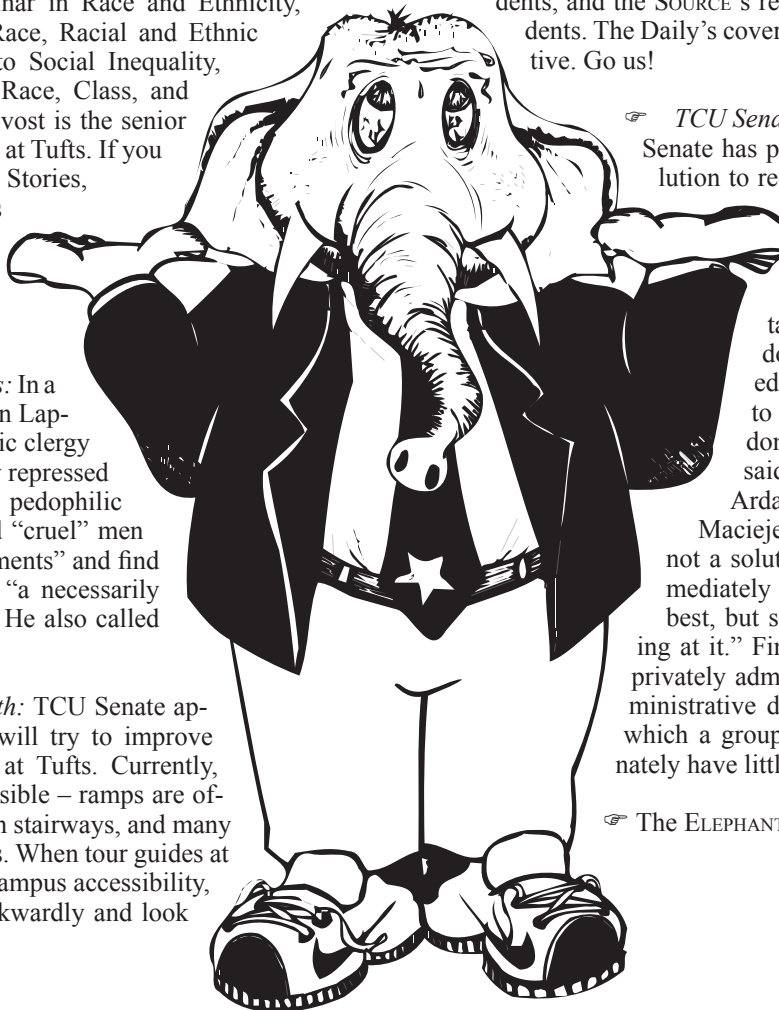
☞ *Those in glass houses:* In a Daily op-ed, junior John Lapin characterized Catholic clergy as “an army of sexually repressed men,” “defender[s] of pedophilic priests,” “archaic,” and “cruel” men who wear “gaudy vestments” and find joining the 21st century “a necessarily impossible challenge.” He also called them bigoted.

☞ *The unspoken truth:* TCU Senate approved a project that will try to improve handicap accessibility at Tufts. Currently, Tufts is largely inaccessible – ramps are often a long distance from stairways, and many buildings lack elevators. When tour guides at Tufts are asked about campus accessibility, they usually cough awkwardly and look away.

☞ *The SOURCE gets some good publicity:* The SOURCE featured in the Daily recently, as we prepare to enter our 30th year. SOURCE members who were interviewed spoke about the need for dialogue, being a space for conservative students, and the SOURCE’s reputation among other students. The Daily’s coverage was surprisingly positive. Go us!

☞ *TCU Senate is at it again:* The TCU Senate has passed a non-binding resolution to reduce the cost of attending Tufts. Tufts has one of the highest tuition rates in the nation, and many students are forced to take out multiple thousand-dollar loans to finance their education. The Senate plans to fix this somehow. “We don’t have set solutions,” said Associate Treasurer Ard Ardan. Meanwhile, Christie Maciejewski said “maybe there’s not a solution that can be made immediately or a solution that’s the best, but someone has to start looking at it.” Finally, some Senators have privately admitted that tuition is an administrative decision by the university, which a group of students can unfortunately have little impact on.

☞ The ELEPHANT never forgets.



Annan's peace plan is an important step forward.

The Future of Syria

■ INTERNATIONAL

by Christopher Piraino

This past week, Kofi Annan, the UN-Arab League special envoy to Syria, presented a six-part peace plan to Bashar al-Assad, who is the President of Syria. Syria officially accepted the peace proposal, but has not reduced the violence or begun working toward any of the six points outlined. The Syrian opposition and other activists have stated that Syria has accepted the peace proposal in bad faith and that the government is not willing to stop fighting the rebels. The foreign opposition to Syria is heating up as well, with U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton meeting with the “Friends of Syria” this past weekend, a group of countries that are determined to end violence in Syria. Syria has to choose whether or not they will abide by Annan’s plan, or if they will risk the direct entrance of other countries on the side of the rebels. This is a pivotal moment in Syria’s future, and the actions al-Assad takes now will decide how the rest of this revolution plays out.

The peace plan that al-Assad has accepted contains six provisions: (1) An “inclusive political process” to address the concerns of the Syrian people, (2) A commitment to stop fighting and using heavy weapons in populated areas, (3) Allow for timely humanitarian aid, (4) Speed up the release of “arbitrarily detained” prisoners, (5) Allow international journalists freedom of movement, and (6) Respect peaceful demonstrations and freedom of association. All of these provisions are desperately needed and are an important first step for both Syria and rebel groups. However, this is not the end of the conflict, but another

beginning. From here, Syria must decide whether they are going to follow the peace proposal.

The peace plan does not include the demand that al-Assad step down as leader of Syria, a compromise that shows just how much Annan and the UN want to stop the violence that is continuing in Syria. The peace plan would not have been accepted had that demand been included, as al-Assad continues to enjoy

the support of a significant portion of the Syrian people. That support comes from both the Ba’ath political party and a number of minority groups within Syria. Many

of these supporters are fearful of what would happen if al-Assad was forced out of power. For the Ba’ath’s, they fear retaliation from rebel groups for their stranglehold on the political power in Syria and their unfair treatment of Syria’s citizens, and the minority groups fear that a sectarian war will erupt in the aftermath of the removal. For all of these supporters, the stability provided by having al-Assad in power and the fear of the unknown currently outweigh the repression and danger inherent in al-Assad’s regime.

Bashar al-Assad almost certainly did not accept the peace proposal because of a change of heart regarding the revolution, but instead is using the plan to slow down international actions against Syria. In fact, if Annan had presented this peace plan to al-Assad only a couple of weeks earlier, al-Assad would

most likely have rejected it. The Syrian army has recently taken over rebel strongholds in Homs and Hama, and accepting the peace plan now allows al-Assad to “compromise” while still holding onto all of the gains made in the conflict so far. In addition, accepting the peace plan makes it much harder for foreign countries to interfere in Syria. However, if Syria does not follow through with the provisions listed in Annan’s plan, they will be giving the foreign countries opposed to al-Assad a chance to intervene. Syria still holds some sway with their allies Russia and China, but that is slowly fading the longer this conflict goes on. Just two weeks ago the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that Syria handled the initial peaceful protests “incorrectly,” perhaps signaling a breakdown in support.

All of al-Assad’s actions indicate that his ultimate goal is to hold onto his power as leader of Syria. With the continued support, however unwilling, of a large portion of the population, it will be hard to force al-Assad to leave. If the rebel groups and the U.N. want to get rid of al-Assad, a legitimate alternative must be provided in order to appease the minority groups who fear the chaos of a Syria without a leader. By

accepting the peace deal, al-Assad has at least stemmed the flood of anger and calls for intervention by the UN, giving Syria breathing room in which they can maneuver.

Following through with Annan’s peace plan is perhaps the only way al-Assad has of remaining in power. If he fails to comply with the directives, the U.N. and the “Friends of Syria” will almost certainly ramp up their support for the opposition. Time is also not in al-Assad’s favor, as the longer the conflict goes on, the more support he will lose from those minority groups and others who still support him out of fear. When that happens, it will be almost impossible for al-Assad to hold onto the reigns of power. ■



Mr. Piraino is a sophomore who is majoring in Computer Science.

Egypt's Constitutional Assembly is not representative of Egyptians.

The Illegitimate Assembly

■ INTERNATIONAL

by Brianna Smith

After last year's protests in Egypt resulted in a regime change, it seemed that a new and better government would be created in Egypt. The Egyptian people envisioned a democratic and representative government, which would truly address their concerns. But progress toward this goal has been mixed. Parliamentary elections were successfully held last year, but the new regime is still dominated by the military, and protests continue. Now, the Egyptian government is preparing to write a new constitution. Unfortunately, they are still walking a thin line between representation and totalitarianism.

Last week, the Constitutional Assembly began the long task of drafting a new central document for their nation. One hundred Egyptians are on the panel, nominated and approved by the Parliament. The panelists have six months to draft a new constitution, after which the document will be voted on by the Egyptian people. Yet only a week into the process, the Assembly is already marred by controversy. Twenty members from the liberal and secular factions of Egyptian politics left the Assembly, claiming it has been rendered illegitimate by biased representation. Looking at the numbers, it is hard to argue.

The problems began when Parliament decided to mandate that fifty of the panelists come from Parliament's own ranks, with the remaining fifty panelists chosen from outside. Previously, more panelists were to be chosen from outside Parliament, which would have opened the Assembly to more diverse array of Egyptians. The Parliament itself is 98% male and around 70% Islamist. Egypt itself is obviously about 50% female, and Christians make up a sizable demographic (about 10% of the population). Given the bias in Parliament, it is unsurprising that the majority

of panelists are from Islamist groups. Of the parliamentary panelists, twenty-five are from the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), the political party affiliated with the Islamic Brotherhood. Fourteen panelists are from the Salafist Nour Party (another right-wing Islamist party), leaving only fourteen panelists from other parties.

This is troubling for many reasons. Several of the Islamist panelists support adding more guidelines from Sharia law to the constitution. While this could be done in a reasonable way, it is still important to have other Egyptians involved in order to counter-balance the religious motivations of some panelists. In addition, the constitution will also address minority rights - an important issue in the diverse nation of Egypt. The homogenous male Islamic panelists lack essential personal experience that would give them insight in determining how and when minority rights must be protected.

The walkout panelists have pledged to create their own constitution. The Constitution for All Egyptians Front plans to include a more diverse group of Egyptians, including more women, religious minorities, and young people. Protesters have been organizing around government buildings to show their support for the Front, joined by the Union of Egyptian Writers, the Cultural Constitution Movement, and many other political figures. Two more panelists, including a liberal member of the FJP, left the Assembly at the first session, when the Assembly decided to carry on despite missing 20% of its members. Other members of the FJP and the Salafi Nour Party have been critical of the Assembly, calling for more discussion and compromise before the Assembly begins. Nevertheless, the Assembly continues, unhampered by the calls for change. Its first step was electing Saad al-Katatni as Committee Chair. al-Katatni is the speaker of

parliament and a major figure in the FJP.

This is not a simple issue. The Islamist Members of Parliament (MPs) were certainly elected with a mandate, and they have every right to help guide their country in this momentous time. As one Muslim Brotherhood leader, Abdul Khaleq al-Sharif, said: "Thirty million people elected those MPs. How come they shouldn't be part of the assembly?" However, the disproportionate representation in the constitutional committee could lead to minority rights being trampled and major shifts in the power of various branches in government. These questions should not be left up to a small demographic of Egyptians.

The United States cannot cast stones without looking at our own past. The Constitutional Convention was made up of fifty-five delegates, all white men. The states were disproportionately represented, and Rhode Island sent no delegates at all. Many people at the time even questioned the legality of a Constitutional Convention; our Articles of Assembly did not allow for a new constitution. Some would argue that, despite all this, the Constitutional Convention produced a document that has served as a guide for a successful nation for more than 200 years. However, this writer and others would point out that the Constitution also perpetuated the racist institution of slavery, and allowed the disenfranchisement of women for over 100 years. This is obviously not a model of the protection of minority rights for the rest of the world to follow. A constitution written by a small segment of a nation's population will almost inevitably result in resentment and discrimination.

In the end, the Egyptian people will get a chance to accept or reject the new constitution in a nation-wide referendum. But this is something of a forced choice - Egyptians will be opting for a flawed and biased constitution, or another six months (or longer) of confusion and political turmoil. Elections for a new President, for instance, will not take place until after the referendum, and it is unclear what would happen if a new constitution did not pass. Either way, it would be a shame if the Assembly wasted six months drafting an inherently flawed document. The Assembly must become more inclusive before any more work is done. ■

Ms. Smith is a senior who is majoring in Psychology, Political Science, and German Studies.

Know your censorship

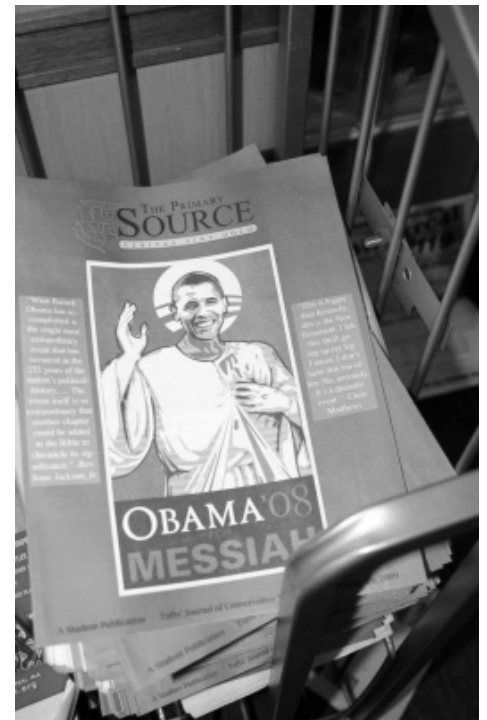
There's a lot of terminology involved in discussions about censorship, and we know that it can be confusing. To aid in you in discussing freedom of speech, the SOURCE presents our guide to censorship. Some of these concepts already exist on campus, and some of them are yet to come – but all of them restrict your right to expression one way or the other. Be aware of what you're fighting.

Bleep Censors

Bleep Censors restrict speech in media by blocking the sound of words that are considered inappropriate by the governing entity. Bleeping is very common in the United States – swearwords are bleeped out in TV shows, radio broadcasts, and even some internet productions, all under the control of the Federal Communications Commission. We can only hope that these policies will not be expanded to real life: just imagine, a loudspeaker system on Tufts campus that drowns out any time a student swears or tries to talk about their sex life.

Book Burning/Newspaper Theft

Book Burning and Newspaper Theft are related concepts centering on preventing the reading of certain material. Book Burning attempts to destroy all instances of a censored book, such as ideologically 'wrong' work, works by denounced authors, or pornography. Newspaper Theft refers to the mass theft and destruction of newspapers or magazines, in an attempt to prevent their readership. Book Burning isn't really a 'thing' at Tufts, but think of Newspaper Theft the next time you see a batch of SOURCES being thrown in the recycling bins by an angry student. (Also, please fish them out again, we don't have a big enough distribution budget to replace them.)



Chilling Effect

The Chilling Effect occurs when people are discouraged from exercising a constitutional right because of the threat of legal action. People may feel unable to speak freely because of fear of being charged with harassment, sued for libel, or otherwise accused of wrongdoing. This can result in self-censorship. If you've ever stopped yourself from saying something because you're worried about getting in trouble with university administration, you're suffering from the Chilling Effect.

Speech Codes

A Speech Code is any rule that restricts free speech in addition to the existing laws governing expression. While often instituted with good intentions, these rules center on verbal offenses, a codification that is often used to limit speech based on abstract conceptions of incivility, blasphemy, and dissent. Tufts has a Speech Code in its harassment policies and its Freedom of Expression Policy, which charges that "Members of the Tufts community owe one another the basic respect and ethical obligations of human beings engaged in a common endeavor." Well-intentioned, yes, but also vague and vulnerable to misuse.

Hecklers

Hecklers try to prevent a speaker from being heard by shouting over them. Tufts has had its own share of disruptive students and questioners, usually at events with conservative speakers. Hecklers represent a difficult dilemma in free speech theory – how do you safeguard a speaker's right to be heard while protecting a heckler's right to voice their opinion? But as a guideline, if you're trying to prevent someone else from being heard, you're probably not furthering the cause of free speech.

Culture of Silence

The Culture of Silence is so immersed in censorship that it no one ever thinks to speak about certain issues. We don't normally talk about sex, or religion, or race, or gender. And when we do, it's always with an air of transgression, or with the idea that we might soon go 'too far' and be stopped. All joking aside, reread the list above, then think about the Culture of Silence at Tufts – and how it harms all of us, regardless of our (expressed or unexpressed) opinions.

How political environmentalism hurts the environment.

From Prometheus to Uncle Sam

■ NATIONAL

by Aaron Pendola

Most Americans are familiar with John Steinbeck's citation of a famous Burns poem: "The best laid schemes of mice and men / Often go awry." This phrase rings particularly true for the federal government, which has a historical record of causing problematic "unintended consequences" in spite of good legislative intentions. The rule of unintended consequences, popularized by sociologist Robert K. Merton, suggests that perverse outcomes can occur despite contrary objectives. Merton lists ignorance, error, and immediate interest as potential causes of unintended consequences, and the legislative process of the federal government clearly depicts this sociological concept in real life. A crisis incites public demand for a simple solution from the political system, in turn creating another crisis and another call to arms. This vicious cycle manifests in countless operations of the federal government; finding an alternative to politics as a way to address societal problems is the only way to stop it. The inadequacy of government problem solving can be explicitly seen in a case study of the 1935 federal "War on Wildfire."

A new "10 A.M. Policy" determined that every single forest fire must be controlled by 10 A.M. the following morning, otherwise more and more resources would be directed to the area.

Starting as early as 1908, the U.S. Forest Service flagged forest fires as a growing crisis demanding political attention. The Weeks Act of 1911 at first met public opposition, but paved the way for the Forest Service to set fire

safety standards on both public and private land. 13 years later, the Clark-McNary Act of 1924 made forest fire protection a federal responsibility, delegating fire suppression using federal funds to the U.S. Forest Service. Bureau of Forestry member Elers Koch became an activist against the law, publishing an essay in the 1934 *Journal of Forestry* in protest. He claimed that the development of roads, fire lookouts, and other preventative measures destroyed the forests much more than forest fires ever could, and that the federal government was ultimately hurting the forests by trying to protect them. The Forest Service bureaucrats in Washington D.C. responded to Koch's outrage by firmly stating they would implement aggressive fire protection policies and



reverse the "let burn" approach allowed to the forest until then. (Pyne 1982, Arno, Allison-Bunnell 2003)

In 1935, national resources were directed to firefighting in America and a strict campaign by the Forest Service was imposed. A new "10 A.M. Policy" determined that every single forest fire must be controlled by 10 A.M. the following morning, otherwise more and more resources would be directed to the area. At face value, the government-declared "War on Wildfire" was

effective. From 1946 through 1978 western wildfires were kept below 1 million acres, a significant improvement of the annual 2 million acre fires between 1917 and 1931 (Arno, Bunnell, 2003). However, the "War on Wildfire" did not only affect annual forest acres burned.

H. H. Chapman, Dean of the Yale School of Forestry, published a research study in 1926 asserting the necessity of surface burning in forests. He claimed that frequent surface burning promoted pine regeneration, suppressed brownspot disease in tree seedlings, and overall reduced wildfire fuels (Chapman 1926). He hypothesized that in the absence of frequent burns, forest fuels would build up in a weakened forest making future

fires more severe. Southern states put political pressure on the Forest Service in the 1940s using Chapman's scientific evidence and opposition to Koch's reported "militarized forest." The Forest Service reluctantly permitted southern states to control burning outside of the 10 A.M. policy. The exception did not apply, however, to the west.

Scientific outrage from the *Journal of Forestry* persisted anyway. Harold Weaver wrote in 1943 that it was impossible to replace surface burning to curb the fuel buildup of the 10 A.M. policy and, although forest fires were at an all time low, the policy would create massive fires in the future. Weaver teamed up with Harold Biswell of UC Berkeley to begin a radical controlled burning campaign to demonstrate its positive effects for the ponderosa pine forests (Biswell et al, 1973). Their civil disobedience encouraged other scientists during the 1950s and 1960s to pursue their research and, ultimately, the majority of scientific opinion sided with the original *Journal of Forestry's* 1934 plea.

(Continued on Next Page)

Mr. Pendola is a senior who is majoring in German Studies and Economics.

By the 1970s, the federal government could not keep up with the cost of fighting wildfires and acknowledged the inefficacy of the program. Bureaucrats also began to admit that the wildfire fuel buildup was a direct consequence of the 10 A.M. policy. Part of this was due to the unprecedented severity of wildfires occurring in the West: for example, the Sundance and Trapper Peak fires in Idaho (1967), the Wenatchee fires in Washington (1970), the Carrizo fire in Arizona (1971), and the Marble Cone and Hog fires in California (1977) (Pyne 1982). Although the federal government accepted that the severity of these fires was in part caused by the “War on Wildfire,” the program proved difficult to scale back. After 60 years of shaping public opinion in support of the agenda through campaigns like Smokey the Bear, the federal government was met with public opposition in suddenly promoting forest fires.

The prophecies of the scientific researchers were realized in full by 1988. Once nicknamed the “asbestos forest” due to low incidence of wildfires, Yellowstone National Park blazed in a series of uncontrollable wildfires not resembling anything that had been documented in at least the past 100 years (Millspaugh, Whitlock, and Bartlein 2000, Romme and Despain 1989). Homes, parks, and habitats now face a genuine threat all over America as the sluggish government repeal of fire suppression policy relies on changing public opinion and an inefficient bureaucratic process. Scientists still assert that the buildup of wildfire fuels

over the 20th century led to the current state of U.S. wildfires: a never-before-seen series of severe forest

fires occurring mainly in the West (Mcclendon, 2009).

In accordance with the vicious cycle, the federal government uses the wildfire crisis to promote a new agenda. “One reason why we have fires in California is global warming,” said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid in 2007. As he championed a comprehensive energy bill going through Senate, the Senator ignored the failure of the federal government to solve the same problem a century ago. The central

planners in Washington are using the global warming crisis to impose new demands on society. Merton’s warnings of unintended consequences based on ignorance, error, and immediate interest go unnoticed as one-size-fits-all approaches continue to be used by the government.

The “War on Wildfire” is just one example of Washington bureaucrats setting out to fix a problem, but end up just making it much worse. The federal government’s model of finding one-size-fits-all solutions to the diverse issues facing society is flawed. Even

when destructive policies are identified, repealing them consistently proves to be much harder than passing new ones. Every policy initiative shapes public opinion and increases reliance on the state, caus-

ing people to continue to seek political solutions for societal difficulties. It is now easier for people to hand over

40% of their income and send their children to fight foreign wars than it is for them to rationally assess any sort of imposed government intervention: anything from how to fight wildfires to educating children or even how roads are built. In the meantime, crisis control such as the “War on Wildfire,” the “War on Poverty,” the “War on Drugs,” or the “War on Crime” create unintended consequences far outweighing their intended benefits. The

government is incapable of solving most problems. People must reject the political system as a means to address issues facing society, even if the government has always handled them. The intention of fighting wildfires is definitely noble, but as the old proverb goes: “the road to hell is paved with good intentions.” ■



People must reject the political system as a means to address issues facing society, even if the government has always handled them.

Are Wildfires getting Worse? Russell Mcclendon (2009)

Flames in our Forest: Disaster or Renewal? Stephen F. Arno, Steven Allison-Bunnell (2003)

Fire in America Stephen J. Pyne 1982

Spot the Fallacy

On December 11, 2011, CBS News's Steve Kroft conducted an interview with President Obama covering a number of topics. In typical political fashion, Obama's responses are riddled with logical fallacies. In this excerpt, Obama addresses his low approval rating. How many fallacies can you find? (Follow the numbers for our answers!)

KROFT: Well, you do have 44% approval rating.

PRESIDENT OBAMA: Well, there are a lot of people around the country. I was thinking in more personal terms. [1] There was a letter recently in the Los Angeles Times from a disillusioned Obama supporter, who was extraordinarily frustrated that I'd compromised over and over again. And the health care bill was a perfect example of compromise. We didn't get the public option, you know? [2] We trimmed our sails.

KROFT: Well, a lot of Democrats feel that way.

PRESIDENT OBAMA: And then this person had gotten sick. [3] And because of the health care bill, they had health care. And the person wrote to the Los Angeles Times saying, "Since this health care bill saved my life, maybe I have a slightly different attitude about these things. [4]" And the point is that every day I'm meeting people, you know, young people who because we increased the Pell Grant and we stopped subsidizing banks in the student loan program and sent more money to kids, they're able to go to college.

And every day we're meeting a military family who says, "You know what? Because you reformed how the V.A. is doing business, or because of Michelle's efforts in supporting us, things are a little easier, given all the sacrifices we've made." [5] Or we've got Mom, who's writing back, saying, "You know what? My son just came back from Iraq. Thanks for keeping your promise." And so, that's why I don't have doubts, because those people tell me that in steady steps, not always as fast as I would like, we're moving this country in the right direction. [6]

1. Anecdotal Evidence: Kroft's claim is false because it is inconsistent with the coming anecdotes.
2. Appeal to Pity: Obama isn't even getting what he wants and "we're" all in this together.
3. Appeal to Fear: Fear of sickness makes Obama's agenda justified.
4. Confusing Cause/Effect: This person's life was saved by a doctor, not by a bill.
5. Appeal to Flattery: An objectively noble family supports Obama therefore his policies are correct.
6. Composition: Because certain individuals approve of Obama, his actions are justifiable.

Overall, Obama employs wishful thinking in that he considers himself to be justified despite a lack of objective evidence supporting him. He makes an appeal to consequences of a belief in that not supporting his policy agenda results in negative consequences like getting sick or staying in Iraq. This is also presented as a false dilemma in that the only alternatives to Obama's policy are those same negative consequences. Unfortunately, President Obama is just one of thousands of illogical politicians in the United States, charged with running our country. You can play this game with almost any one of their speeches.

Obama's remark to Medvedev reveals his post-election plans.

Obama's Etch-A-Sketch

■ INTERNATIONAL

by Timothy J. Lesinski

On March 26th, President Obama told Russian President Dmitry Medvedev something quite revealing about his presidency when he thought his microphone was off. Talking about the European missile shield program, he said to Medvedev, "This is my last election. After my election I will have more flexibility." This is troubling, as it is a sign of how he will handle issues—both domestic and foreign—after the 2012 election.

This remark shows Obama's ignorant and dangerous attitude towards foreign countries; he still believes that because he is different from George W. Bush, and has reached out to the international community more, he can solve all the world's problems. As we have seen with Iran, Syria, and other countries that don't appear to be listening to Obama, this is clearly not the case. His Cairo speech in 2009 was touted as an outreach to Muslims and the Arab world that would mend all the damage done to relations by the Bush years. Three years later,

the relations between the U.S. and the Middle East are just as bad, if not worse. Egypt overthrew its pro-American dictator in an uprising, and the new regime is now detaining Americans. Despite Obama's efforts at negotiating, Iran hasn't stopped enriching uranium, and has merely bought time with endless meetings while continuing its nuclear program. Obama sent an ambassador back to Syria after the U.S. ambassador was pulled during the Bush Administration. Now Bashar al-Assad, referred to by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2011 as a "reformer" in the early days

of the Syrian uprising, is now murdering his own citizens.

In the current case, Obama's remark about flexibility is particularly disturbing because of who it was intended for. While said to Medvedev, the remark was clearly intended for Putin, as shown by Medvedev's reply "I will transmit this information to Vladimir." Putin recently ran for President on a platform of opposition to the West and American intervention, so it is disturbing that Obama is so willing to cede important issues such as missile defense to Putin. One of Putin's largest speeches made an analogy of

This remark shows Obama's ignorant and dangerous attitude towards foreign countries.

the current state of Russia's relations to Western nations to the Battle of Borodino, where Russia defeated an invasion coming from the West. This language shows hostility to America that will not be solved by Obama's speeches. Russia has opposed taking any action against Syria, and consistently blocks the UN Security Council from taking action against Iran. The fact that Obama indicated that he was so willing to stop missile defense will make it harder to get anything in exchange from Russia (such as a vote in favor of sanctions on Iran or Syria) for ending the missile defense program, and indicates weakness to the Russians in the future. President Obama's claim that he has rehabilitated America's image abroad is harmless when he's using it as a method of campaign-

ing in the U.S. However, once he starts to believe it to the point of basing foreign policy on his own cult of personality, it endangers the United States.

Obama's remark also reveals much about all of his policies. Obama's plan, as shown by this speech, is to run down the clock until reelection, and then enact all of his unpopular policies when he can no longer be held accountable. Missile defense is just the beginning. There are several other issues Obama is putting off until next year. He has refused to make a decision on the Keystone XL pipeline,

which would provide the U.S. with cheap Canadian oil, but which is also controversial because of the more destructive extraction methods used in getting oil from the Tar Sands. While

Obama waits, Canada is planning on shipping that same oil to China. Obama is also avoiding taking a stand on controversial issues ranging from immigration to taxes to gay marriage. Once he no longer has to worry about public opinion, Obama will be able to do whatever he wants. Already, Obama's compromise on contraceptives is merely a promise that he will modify the policy before it goes into effect. Obama could easily try to impose a carbon tax, more regulations on unhealthy foods, or any manner of unpopular measures. Anyone, whether they are supporters or opponents of these programs, should be alarmed by Obama's ambiguity. The public deserves to know before the election what President Obama will do in his second term, if he is reelected.

While Mitt Romney has taken heat for a campaign strategist's suggestion that he will be like an etch-a-sketch after the primary, at least Romney has articulated some opinions on issues. Obama is running as a blank slate, with few indications of which policies he will enact should he be reelected. This strategy worked for Obama in 2008, and will hopefully fail to work the second time around.



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Students ignore unfamiliar ideas at their own peril

Ideological Monolith

■ NATIONAL

by Jonathan Danzig

Wait, you're a Republican? No, no, it's fine, I have Republican friends." At most top universities, the student body and faculty fall primarily on the left. At Tufts especially, advocates of small government are so few and far between that they are seen almost as oddities; some students from liberal enclaves are inclined to view their conservative classmates as intruders from the less-enlightened parts of America. Once the initial shock wears off, however, curiosity sets in; the initial "No, it's fine" is quickly replaced by "So, what do you actually believe?" The fact that such a conversation is commonplace at Tufts is indicative of a large gap in higher education and in popular culture.

In the past few decades, opinion polls of the American people are roughly consistent on political ideology: around 40% of Americans consider themselves "conservative," around 40% consider themselves "moderate," and around 20% consider themselves "liberal." Yet it is possible, at Tufts and other top institutions, to never encounter someone representing that 40% of conservatives, from matriculation to commencement. The entire right wing at Tufts is a scant minority.

It may seem counter-intuitive, but the students who are hurt the most by this ideological monolith are those who fall on the left. Right-wing students at Tufts are often inclined to complain about the cards being stacked against them, but the case is ironically the opposite—it is the left-wing students, who have been raised in liberal enclaves and have never met an informed ideological opponent in their lives, who graduate from college without having their ideological beliefs challenged. Right-wing students who

live at Tufts are surrounded by ideological dissenters, so the politically engaged among them must be informed enough to counter a room full of people who believe that they are wrong. In the context of modern politics and culture, ideological one-sidedness serves to deprive its students of intellectual diversity, which should serve as a cornerstone of intellectual thinking.

The impetus for writing this article is the Supreme Court's hearing of the 26-state suit against President Obama's healthcare law, or "Obamacare." The plaintiffs and defendants have recently completed their oral arguments, and now the Supreme Court will rule. Until recently, many on the left had confidently predicted that this law—mandating the purchase of a private product—is so obviously constitutional that there is little point in even engaging the subject. Furthermore, they say, since healthcare is so important, it follows that Obamacare is the solution to American healthcare problems. But to believe that there is no logical opposition to Obamacare is to live in an ideological vacuum.

This writer asked a student in Tufts' "Healthcare in America" class if there was a single student in the roughly 160-member class that openly thought a) Obamacare's health insurance mandate is not a good idea, and/or b) Obamacare's health insurance mandate is unconstitutional. The student responded no, not that he knew of. In contrast, in many or most opinion polls taken of Obamacare, a majority or large

plurality of respondents oppose the law, and a near-supermajority opposes the individual health insurance mandate. The students in Healthcare in America are entitled to believe that a majority of Americans are wrong or misled on healthcare, but they are being unquestionably deprived not to actually know anyone who personally believes that.

It is therefore reassuring that, especially since the beginning of the Supreme Court's oral arguments, many students have come to this writer and other dissenters from Obamacare to ask, in all sincerity, "Why are you against Obamacare?" Supporters of the law cannot understand how someone can be against a law that aims to increase healthcare coverage, lower costs, and increase cover-

age. Furthermore, to its supporters, the individual mandate is appropriate because healthcare is a unique market. In contrast, opponents of the law believe that its ends and means simply do not

align; objectively, Obamacare is over 2000 pages long, gives unprecedented power to unelected federal bureaucrats in the Health and Human Services Department, and forces all Americans to buy a product that they may not want. Even without getting into the specifics of the bill, those three attributes give Tufts' ideological minorities—and a plurality/majority of Americans—pause.

From New York to Los Angeles, the left is predominant in popular culture. When surrounded by ideological counterparts, it is very easy to assume that any strong dissent is the product of ignorance or bad faith; the idea of "You disagree with me, but you'll agree after I educate you." In contrast, even in the reddest of red states, right-wing Americans still see the national news media, Hollywood, and the television industry. As ideological minorities everywhere are forced to understand their ideological opponents, so too should majorities do the same. Pluralism is an American value. ■



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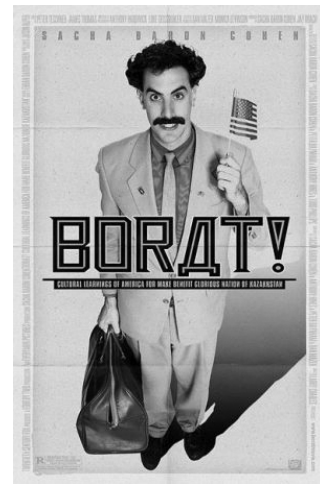
Cain's Campaign for Change

In honor of his upcoming appearance at Tufts and the popularity of his "Rabbit" ad, we at the SOURCE have a few suggestions for Cain Connections's next ad:



← Pikachu, I choose you... as runningmate!

Ubeki-beki-beki-beki-stan-stan: The Movie →



← Nein! Nein! Nein!
Stop the German Takeover of Greece!

This is the U.S. Economy:



This is the U.S. Economy on the 9-9-9 Plan:



NOTABLE AND QUOTABLE

Both free speech rights and property rights belong legally to individuals, but their real function is social, to benefit vast numbers of people who do not themselves exercise these rights.

—Thomas Sowell

We have a massive system to regulate creativity. A massive system of lawyers regulating creativity as copyright law has expanded in unrecognizable forms, going from a regulation of publishing to a regulation of copying.

—Lawrence Lessig

Gas prices are expected to continue to rise throughout the summer, and oil companies say it's because of high demand due to warmer summer weather — as opposed to what they told us a couple of months ago, that oil prices went up because of higher demand for winter heating oil. So basically, if there's weather, gas prices go up.

—Jay Leno

I seriously think that The Source is the most politically diverse of any campus organization. On a true spectrum of political ideology, which would be total state control on one extreme and anarchy on the other, we've got writers all over the map.

—Austin R. Berg

It's never too early to learn that the government is a greedy piglet that suckles on a taxpayer's teet until they have sore, chapped nipples.

—Ron Swanson

I'm old, but I still know how to do my job.

—Pope Benedict

The constitution must be in the hands of all Egyptians, because it will for a long time chart the road Egypt takes internally and externally.

—Mohammed Hussein Tantawi

This is my last election. And after my election, I have more flexibility.

—Barack Obama

I understand you. I transmit this information to Vladimir --

—Dimitri Medvedev

Man is the only creature that dares to light a fire and live with it. The reason? Because he alone has learned to put it out.

—Henry Jackson Vandyke

Cuba does not know fear. It scorns the lie. It listens with respect. It believes in its ideas. It unshakably defends its principles and has nothing to hide from the world.

—Fidel Castro

All told, these profit levels have put the world's five largest publicly traded oil companies on track to earn more than \$100 billion before year's end. Yet, at the same time that Big Oil's bottom line is going up, so are Americans' energy costs.

—Alyson Schwartz

I have been developing the Swanson Pyramid of Greatness for years. It's a perfectly calibrated recipe for maximum personal achievement. Categories include: Capitalism, God's way of determining who is smart, and who is poor. Crying, acceptable at funerals and the Grand Canyon. Rage. Poise. Property rights. Fish, for sport only, not for meat. Fish meat is practically a vegetable.

—Ron Swanson

Yo, no one has any control over how they're born, you fucking asshole bullying piece of shit.

—Andrew Ti

Saying goodbye is the hardest thing I've ever had to do. I'm leaving with a heavy heart, a clear conscience and I have high, high hopes for the future.

—Rod Blagojevich

If I can't put food on the table for my children, how can I pay for health care coverage? What moron came up with that idea?

—Jan Gonzales

I'm not going to worry too much about what Rick [Santorum] is saying these days. I know that when you fall further and further behind you get a little more animated.

—Mitt Romney

Accumulating data about you isn't just a strange hobby for these corporations. It's their whole business model. And you are not their client. You are their product.

—Al Franken on internet privacy

Last night, we heard promises, promises of change, and today there are injured and martyrs, so how do you expect people to believe these promises? Syrians today are saying, 'We want to live in dignity,' nothing more, nothing less.

—Yassar al-Ayte

Reform for all the colonialist Western countries is to give them all they want and to abandon all the rights, and this will be their unattainable dream whether under these circumstances and under any other circumstances.

—Bashar al-Assad