

# the north avenue review



issue 49, summer 2002

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Did you notice how Andrew Pilsch wrote most of the articles in this issue? You should also know that he is currently typing this in the third person. Don’t make Andrew write the next issue (which will be issue 50!) by himself. You can write for NAR. Anyone can. Write down your thoughts, stories, whatever and send it to [nar@gatech.edu](mailto:nar@gatech.edu) or, if you are old-school and prefer paper, you can drop it in our mailbox, which is in the front of the post office by that vending machine that sells stamps.

Besides, chicks dig published authors. Or so I’m told.

# Information Overload

I think I missed something, but when did this whole “invading-Iraq-as-a-good-idea” thing happen? More importantly, why does no one care?

Oh yeah, Allow me to welcome you to the new issue of the North Avenue Review. It's our 49th issue. We've got a feature on the role of the University in American Life. It affects you; trust me. Read on.

Honestly, the most distressing thing about watching our nation become embroiled in a conflict that will be Vietnam with sand is the fact that no one gives a damn, especially our own government. Of course, the voice of the American public is not exactly lifting in outrage over this travesty against the very freedom upon which this nation was founded. If we stand idly by, evil will triumph. I'm not talking about the Iraqis, either. By evil, I mean our own government's desire to invade other nations and bully them for no reason. If we attack Iraq, it will be like Pearl Harbor, except we will be the Japanese. You've heard of Pearl Harbor, right? You know, that Michael Bay movie. Yeah, that was real.

Another thing about this whole invasion of Iraq, are you aware that if (when) we invade Iraq and our soldiers start dying by the boatload, that people our age, in fact, you and I will be called upon to serve our country? You do understand that a war, right now, will mean that WE WILL BE THE ONES WHOSE BLOOD WILL BE SPILLED IN THE SANDS OF IRAQ. The question you have to ask is this: are you prepared to die for an unjust cause? Are you prepared to give up your life for an idiot son of an asshole who thinks he's God's appointed savior of Freedom? These are the questions that all young people in America have to ask themselves.

You say to yourself, "well, I attend this fine institution of higher learner, I would never be called upon to waste my life fighting in some idiot's stupid, useless struggle." Quoting from sss.gov, the Selective Service System's website: “[A] college student may have his induction postponed until he finishes the current semester or, if a senior, the end of the academic year.” And there you have it. When we decide that it's time to invade Iraq and start wasting the lives of so many Americans, every one of us (I think I have a 7 in 10 chance of speaking to a guy here) may be called upon to die. And don't think we can outlive the draft. They can call you until you are 26. It has been said that George Bush the first didn't want to invade Iraq because he was smart enough to realize that he would have to stay for five years. I'm 20; you do the math.

It works this way, if you are between the age of 20 and 26, there is a very good chance that you may end up dead in a foreign land if the assholes we elected to run this great nation decide that it is necessary to invade a country that hasn't actually done anything to hurt us.

Don't give me any September 11th bullshit, either. If we invaded every nation that had anything to do with sponsoring terrorism, then why isn't Saudi Arabia a smoking crater? By all accounts, the Saudis are doing a great amount to encourage international terrorism; probably more than Iraq. So, ask yourselves, what is George Bush the second's real motives for invading Iraq? Why would he ask you to die?

Right now, every college student in America has to be prepared to die in an unjust war, for a delusional, power-mad, moron. Is this something you are prepared to do?

# Untitled

by  
Andrew Pilsch

You're sitting in an office with a sweaty, fat, bald middle-aged man in a cheap shirt with a cheaper tie that bears stains of today's lunch, whatever it may have been. You sit across from his desk. Behind you, on a chair by the door, sits a man wearing sunglasses who has on a black suit, black shoes, a black tie, a white shirt, and white socks. He is watching you and the fat man talk. You have an appointment. You are expected.

Upon entering the office, you phrase the fat man's name as a question. He says, "Come in son," and gestured towards you, the fat on his sunburned forearms rippling, beckoning you into the office. You walk in, close the door, and walk to the lone chair in front of his desk. You look at the man in the black suit. The fat man doesn't say anything about him.

"Sit down son."

You sit in the chair. It's vaguely padded, but, on the whole, rather uncomfortable. As the fat man stares at you, sweat beads on your forehead and begins to run down your forehead and into your eyes. The fat man is glistening as he shifts his massive frame in his chair. Pink from the heat, the sweat on his skin refracts the fluorescent light into your eyes.

Having reached your decision long ago, you hand the fat man your form. He stares at the crumbled, white paper, sweat streaming down

his brow, and scowls. You begin to panic. Maybe it won't work out after all. You'll be stuck.

"This looks good, son, but, I must ask, what attracts you to us?"

"Well, things just haven't been working out. The work has been too much and the people aren't nice. I thought I'd give you guys a try."

You realize that was a stupid thing to say. You realize that it makes you look weak and lazy. As you fight back tears, the fat man looks at you. His eyes narrow. The forgotten man in the black suit leans in, and his chair creaks behind you. A pin drops.

Suddenly the fat man beams: he stands. You stand. He pumps your hand up and down, beaming

The door opens behind you. Glancing over your shoulder, you see a beautiful blonde thing walk in. She is all gleaming white teeth, perfectly proportioned breasts, and tan skin. She is a vision of feminine beauty that has been lacking during the last year.

"Son, welcome to Management, here's your new girlfriend. Her name is Cindy. She enjoys puppies, sunshine, and Dave Matthews. She also gives good head."

“Ho boy does she ever,” the silent man in the black suit utters. You notice a blush rise on tan skin.

“Glad you chose the right major, son. Any questions?”

Beyond your wildest dreams, you stammer “no.”

“Good, go outside and meet your new friends. Oh, and have a piece of cake and a glass of punch.”

You walk out of the office, with Cindy’s tan arm clinging to yours. She grabs your ass and giggles.

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# NAR Feature

## What is the role of the University in American Life?

In this issue of the North Avenue Review, the staff decided to try something new. Instead of just publishing the collected ranting and raving of the Georgia Tech Community, we are going to start focusing those rants a little more. This issue, the staff chose to discuss the role of universities in American life. What follows are the responses of one staff member and several people from Tech. If you have any thoughts on the matter, write the editor at [nar@gatech.edu](mailto:nar@gatech.edu). Check out the back cover to find out more about next month’s theme.

For now, enjoy the essays.

- Andrew

# Britney Spears and the Trivialization of Higher Education

by  
Matthew Bryant

An intoxicating bass line, soaring high notes, emotional stories of relationships long gone or yet to be, a simple, repetitive chorus belted by a beautiful, tan, barely-dressed female who performs perfectly choreographed dance moves on a stage lit with an array of color-changing, robotic lights, hypnotizing the audience and directing their emotional response with amazing precision, a Britney Spears concert is a roller coaster that delivers feel-good high after high. And Spears is the icon of a movement, an age of music and indeed a lifestyle that has been labeled, because of its widespread impact and popularity, as “pop”.

More than its extraordinary sales volume and overwhelming fan base this music is the heartbeat of America: television execs, movie companies, magazines and the American people battle for the scraps from the tables of pop’s biggest stars. A snippet of gossip or a spot with a product, another glimpse of the midriff or the latest music video, we hold our breath waiting for the next emotional fix delivered by these dealers of the dream world.

And with such breadth in pop’s coverage of the media and the American people this emotional drug has become our only occupation and our only language. Our temple is now the experience: the union of sensory responses that generates the desired emotional outcome. Phrases like, “it doesn’t ‘do it’ for me” or concepts like a “warm fuzzy feeling” have become the only evidence of our humanity.

With emotions as our only vocabulary industry is forced to change the way it communicates with its audience. Instead of reaching beyond the senses to the mind the thinking brain must instead be short circuited in order to speak to our new control center: feeling. Advertising is perhaps the best example of this, a product no longer meets particular needs making it a worthwhile purchase but high-budget commercials show you how a product will make you feel: happy, powerful, complete, comfortable or one of any pleasing feelings that can be delivered to your door. Our emotional brain has grown fat with this sensory input while the thinking brain is left emaciated from a lack of depth in this new, pop culture.

With so many institutions forced to compete with Spears and her emotional puppet strings perhaps the most frightening is higher education. Because now emotions are our truth and our guide instead of the rigors of the scientific method or the framework of Aristotelian logic that have for ages sought to distill lasting truth from lifetimes of experience.

Colleges and Universities have already witnessed the first signs of this apocalypse of the classroom. In order for students to remain attentive and retain any material professors are forced to disguise learning beneath a façade of multimedia presentations, movies and web sites providing tantalizing, bite-sized chunks of knowledge that aren’t too painful for our infant brains to swallow. But the medium isn’t the problem it’s the message.

Leading the student through theory is no longer sufficient or warm and fuzzy; concepts must be taught with an outpouring of examples, examples that provide the student with a handbook on how to solve problems instead of the raw materials necessary to assemble any solution. The inclusion of more examples and the new formula style of education are more comfortable for today's youth who aren't used to using their brains to draw conclusions.

But handing out formulas and teaching applications has turned the modern university into a trade school, giving students skills that will reward them with careers but leave them unable to think for themselves. The value of an undergraduate degree is now on par with the high school education of yesteryear, yesterday's auto shop, today's mechanical engineering classroom and yesterday's typing class, today's business degree. And even if a thinking education is still taught in today's classroom, students aren't interested in it: in the mid-1990s the number of students pursuing degrees in "parks and recreation" surpassed those seeking diplomas in electrical engineering.

In order for today's youth to find the challenge that an undergraduate education provided so many years ago they must now pursue a more advanced degree, pushing the frontier of actual learning back another step. Yes, graduate school has accepted the torch of independent thinking, but for how long? As pop

culture wages its war against thought the frontlines of higher education are being continually pushed back. Increasing the time period required for a high school student to net the same education as an alumnus sixty years previous. As this burden of a thoughtful education grows in years the temptation to escape to the workplace grows stronger.

And as that happens (or continues to happen, depending on your perception) the nation's workforce will be reduced to employees capable only of following a list of procedures and innovation will die. And if tomorrow's Ph.D. continues to qualify one to be in the classroom the process will only spiral creative thinking into nonexistence.

It seems that the monolith of modern American culture could be the poison that destroys the creative spirit that created and prospered this nation. Pop culture has already infected our foundation. Higher education has become a means to an end, occupation, and is quickly losing its salience in the edification of the individual and Spears and the American people couldn't be happier.

### ***The Few, The Proud, The NAR Staff***

The Staff of the North Avenue Review is constantly looking for new members to help out in the production of the magazine. We need people to edit stories, work on the magazine's layout, and manage our website. Without resorting to out and out bribery, there is pizza at the meetings and we might pay you to work for us. E-mail **[nar@gatech.edu](mailto:nar@gatech.edu)** to find out when and where the meetings are currently happening.

# Three Months Gone

by  
Andrew Pilsch

Lying on the cold tile floor, admiring the Jackson Pollack my stomach heaved up before I keeled over, I realize that this isn't exactly where I had envisioned myself three months ago, when I arrived on campus. You may say that no one dreams about lying on the floor of their freshman dorm in a pool of vomit when they think about college. That's true, of course, but not what I mean. The state of mind that spawned the vomit-floor system that I am a part of is not something I could have visualized when imagining freshman year at Georgia Tech.

## I. Orientation

The night before I hopped into the family car to drive the hour and a half to campus, I couldn't sleep. My mind couldn't wrap around the idea that I was going to college. College. It was so mysterious. This big idea sitting in downtown Atlanta was going to be my home for the next four years. The time would be spent making new friends and having adventures. A romantic abstraction on par with Twain's river and Kerouac's road. This would be the place where, well I didn't know what would happen, but I was sure it would be exciting.

The first day was great. People bustled around with televisions, carpet, shelves, all the ephemera of modern living. The air filled with the smoke of char-grilled hamburger and the crisp tinge of autumn. It wasn't just the beginning of a new season; it felt like the beginning of a new life. This, it seemed, would be the day I would tell my children that I started to live. It was, of

course, the start of something new, but not life, for the next three months weren't living.

After a weekend spent wandering the campus in awe of what I was seeing, with hushed breath and quick pulse, I lay down and tried to sleep. Tomorrow would be my first day of college. It was the beginning of a great journey. A long and winding road lay ahead. If only I knew how many bodies littered it.

## II. MATH 1501

The first Monday was the only time, in my whole life, that I would look forward to going to class. I mean, it was college. I would be living the college life. Lectures. Debates. Late nights huddled over beer debating Nietzsche. The first day, my feet could not carry me fast enough to my calculus lecture; the greatest adventure of my life was about to begin.

When the professor walked in, I was positively bubbling over with the joy of learning. I wanted to stand and shout:

"I am here! Fill me with your knowledge." It was pathetic, but it was the truth. College! Wow!

Behind me, someone drawled, "Thank Jesus he ain't Chinese."

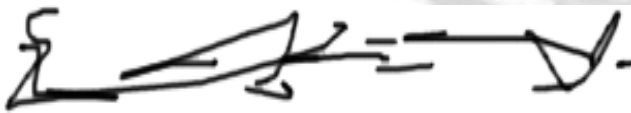
The man who was going to teach me calculus stopped in the middle of the three large blackboards that adorned the far wall of the massive lecture hall. He set his briefcase on the



table, snapped his thin arms to his sides, stood at attention, and bent his thin waist. His shaved head bobbed towards us as his body contorted into a curt, stiff bow. In thick Slavic, he then spat:

“Good day, my name is Vladimir Rodanov. I visit US from University in St. Petersburg. You know St. Petersburg? Is in Russia. Okay, today we talk about Taylor series. Zee Taylor series of sinus look like zis.”

On the board, he scrawled:



That afternoon, after lunch, I learned how to drop classes at Georgia Tech.

### III. Lunch

Lunch, at Tech, was another matter entirely. It was amazing how fast the nice tablecloths and the salt and pepper shakers had disappeared from the tables after the parents had left. More than that, though, was the smell:

“Yuck, what’s that smell?”

“What smell, honey?” asked the cash register operator, obviously puzzled.

“That rotten vegetable smell.”

“Sugar, that’s your lunch.”

Most of the time, it was edible and I have always prided myself on being of strong stomach. I met my match, though, in the Kung Pao chicken. I knew it was trouble the minute I lay eyes on it.

For one thing, the sauce in Kung Pao chicken is red, not brown. It didn’t matter; living on noodles and ice cream for the last few weeks had made me delusional. The sign said “Kung Pao Chicken” and I wanted to eat the chicken of Kung Pao. Greedily, I piled rice onto my plate and smothered it in a brown sauce, the festering sauce of pure evil (sometimes, at night, I still catch a whiff of it and shudder). Eyeing my fellow inmates, I shuffled off to a safe corner table with my horde and, with my back to the wall, set down. As I huddled over the steaming pile of gray meat, my eyes darted back and forth. They may try and take my Kung Pao chicken, but they’ll never take me alive! It’s mine! Mine! All mine you hear me! Watching for bitches who might want to shiv me for my meal, I began to woof down rice and chicken

After about ten fork-fulls, I tasted the stuff. My eyes bulged as large as dinner plates. I’m willing to wager that my face turned green. I couldn’t run to the bathroom fast enough. I knocked over chairs that got in my way; I would have trampled anyone, even girls, in my dash to the bathroom.

I coughed up the chicken, rice, and lunch’s noodles. My dream kissed porcelain. After all the food was up, I dry-heaved for ten minutes. When it was all over, I set on the floor of the men’s room and wept for the red, rich, gooey Kung Pao chicken of my youth.

### IV. CS 1311

As a computer science major, I was excited to get to my first class in my chosen career path, even after the morning’s events. I had heard the stories. CS majors never got laid. They never saw the sun for that matter. They loved coding. I mean, loved it. There were no women, etc, etc, etc. I was going to change all those

stereotypes. Armed with my wit, good looks, and brains, my cool CS friends and I would have our adventures. Beer. Huddling. Nietzsche. All that.

I opened the door to the lecture hall and there they sat. Pale skin. Beady eyes. Thick glasses. Bushy beards. Bony arms. Pudgy Bellies. Plaid. Comb-overs. The horror. The horror.

I sat in the back, hoping to avoid their sheep-like stares, to avoid getting sucked into their world. One of them came in and set next to me.

“AMD or Intel?”

“Excuse me?”

“I said: AMD or Intel?” he squeaked the words, as if they had to build up proper pressure to escape his clinched teeth.

“Umm . . . Intel, I guess.”

“Haha, loser.”

I looked into his beady eyes, at his dirty Linux t-shirt, his fat belly. What could I say that wouldn't make him cry?

After getting back my first coding assignment, I was discussing my grade with my TA. Okay, I was shouting at him:

“Why the Hell did I get a zero on this assignment?!?!?! My code works!”

“You used a different algorithm.”

“But my algorithm is more efficient.”

“Well, creating your own algorithm wasn't really the point of the assignment. Make the code we tell you and nothing more.”

Hear that? It's my heart breaking.

## V. PSYC 1000

“Welcome to college! Here you will get to experience the best of college. Academic life will merge with college life and you will make friends for the rest of your life. . .”

“This woman doesn't make any sense.”

“Shh. . .”

“... The purpose of this class is to welcome you to college. As the course title says, this will introduce you to college life. As an introduction to college life, we will spend this semester studying résumé writing, job interviewing, and network building. . .”

“What are you writing down?! This woman hasn't said anything coherent since she walked in.”

“Hush! I'm taking notes.”

“...As we start learning about college life, I would like to teach you how to say 'hello' in Spanish. It's 'Hola.' Say it class.”

mumble

“Again.”

mumble

“Good, now write that down, because it will be on your test.”

"You aren't seriously going to write that down, are you?"

"Yes, now hush, before you get us in trouble."

"This is college, you don't get in trouble for talking."

"So on to résumé writing... excuse me, little boy in the front... yes, you... go sit in the corner over there and think about how talking in class deprives your classmates of their opportunity to learn."

"The corner? You've got to be shitting me!"

"Oh, a potty mouth, eh? Well, smarty-pants, you can sit there tomorrow too. And remember young man, I've got my eye on you."

grumble, grumble

"What was that, young man?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing, what?"

"Nothing, ma'am."

"Good... Now, where were we? Oh yes, writing a résumé is an excellent introduction to college life. This is because college life is a preparation for real life and real life is a job..."

#### VI Dorm Life

So the roommate had a new girlfriend every week. I know that's how parents justify sleeping with hookers, but put that out of your mind. Actually, he still had a girlfriend at home,

so I guess this perpetual stream of tight-pant-clad girls were just the women he fucked for fun on Friday nights. Eventually, I stopped learning their names, and they became one blonde blur. Lord knows where they went and what they did when I wasn't there. Lord knows, I didn't want to find out.

The roommate is more popular than me. The roommate is better looking than me. The roommate works harder than me. The roommate gets better grades than I do. In retaliation, I eat his food. Petty, yes; Pathetic, yes; Justified, no. He goes drinking on Friday nights with his frat brothers and I stay at home and eat his Pop Tarts. Hey, it's a living.

So, one day, I'm rocking the headphones. Iggy Pop, with the Stooges in tow, sprays my ears with raw power. Suddenly, this trippy, creaky metallic beat shows up. I'm pretty sure it wasn't there the last time I was listening to it. Sure enough, the beat was still there when paused Winamp, and it was getting faster. At this point, I knew what it was. I knew that if I turned around, I would hate myself. I turned around, what did I have to lose?

There he was, humping some blonde chick, who was faking her way to orgasm.

"Jesus Tap-dancing Christ!" I couldn't help it; it sort of slipped out.

He looked up, she squirmed. Drunkenly, he spun his finger in a circle.

"Some privacy, dude."

Iggy screamed: "And I'm the world's forgotten son..."

## VII Finals

Time passed. The semester drew to a close. Dead week was marked by a cessation of the roommate's bedroom bimbo revue. Studying, I guess. He finished his finals on Wednesday and went home to his family. I finished on Tuesday, but I was determined to have an adventure, to justify the last three months that had just slipped through my fingers. Gone. Dead. Wasted. I told my parents I would be ready to leave on Friday. I wanted to say goodbye to all my friends, I told them. Lies, all lies.

I spent Wednesday making a South Dakota driver's license on my computer and thinking happy thoughts about dismembering the fuckers who were playing roller hockey in the halls at four in the morning. My mind was fixed on one idea, my adventure. I was going to buy a bottle of booze with my fake ID. After all, being underage and drinking is a fine collegiate tradition. Something to tell my kids about, someday.

As I strolled, content in my resolve, to my daily noodle and vanilla ice cream lunch, one of the hockey-fuckers stopped and asked me how I was. I growled at him. I was on a mission. Woe to the man who gets in my way.

Lunch, then a quick walk to a nearby convenience store netted me what was going to be my ultimate college experience, my great adventure. I clutched the bottle of Jack to my chest, like a child. It was my one last hope. Binge drinking alone in my room on a sunny Wednesday afternoon seemed as exciting as class once had. College. Wow.

Back in the dorm, I poured a shot of Jack into a paper cup and downed it. After three of these, pouring seemed like such a waste of time. I guzzled out of the bottle. Then, a funny

thing happened. Language, my stomach, my legs, and consciousness all failed me, in that order.

When I woke up, I was lying here. At some point, the bottle rolled off the bed and broke. There's glass everywhere. I don't think I'm bleeding anymore, though. Having no idea what time it is, lying in a puddle of vomit and blood, it hit me. A moment of clarity, this early in my addiction? Amazing! All the pieces of the puzzle fit together and there it was. College wasn't an adventure at all. It was a struggle. A struggle to survive. Eliminating all of our predators, we needed some other way to sharpen ourselves for divorce and jobs and whatever else life could throw at us. Suffering. It all came down to suffering. We weren't learning about derivatives, computers, or any of that shit. We were learning how to cope with the crushed hopes and abject pain that makes up our lives. It all makes so much sense. Then I blacked out again.

Now, I'm just going to lie here in my warm pool of bile and wait for feeling to return to my legs. I'm sure someone will be along eventually.

# What is the Role of the University In Diversity?

by  
Temitope Aiyejorun

The University is responsible for maintaining an undertone that promotes diversity. And, no, I am not referencing Affirmative Action or any other quota systems. That topic is for another day. But let me take the time to clear up some thoughts that many people seem to have about Tech. They don't use a quota system to select students. It is based on merit. And so, back to the issue, the University should be responsible.

And, so you say, how? Well, it is important that in the most PC of terms that the University says clearly that it supports diversity. I reference Georgia Tech Housing's theme of diversity as a fundamental component to living in housing. Certainly, our school is a prime example of a melting pot. And so the University says, "We promote diversity." But it is not just saying you do that makes the cut. The University should convey that to faculty, staff, and students by having diversity training. Not only should there be training, but it should also be made clear that there

are consequences for not following through.

And giving the various diverse groups, which is widely defined, the opportunity for expression without infringement on the beliefs of others is vital in the University's role. Certainly, this liberty is one that has a line that may be murky at times. So, for this reason, the University is left with a difficult task, certainly one that regardless of the stance the University takes will gain them supporters - and the opposite. And looking from the side of the University simply saying we provide education. Well, in the end, this could invariably hurt the reputation of the school. From studies galore, much has been said to how one's personal life affects one's academic life, and so it becomes clear that one cannot go well without the other forever. If we were all self-regulators and the diversity gene was planted in all of us, free of defects, then the University would not have to play the role of Diversity police because we would all know what to do.

## The Role of the University in America

by  
Anonymous

I am a fourth year computer science student, and here is what universities, i.e. Tech, mean to America, i.e. me:

- It means I might be stuck with a roommate that doesn't speak English, but that's ok, we can trade

him with the room across the hall.

- It means that I can abstain from drugs and alcohol and still make a 0.75 or I can abstain from social contact and make a 3.0.
- It means that females must not be as good at engineering as males.
- It means that I won't learn about the history of the school until I am about to leave.
- It means that Asians, Indians, and gays are allowed in on-campus fraternities but not blacks. There are black fraternities for that kind of thing, but its not called segregation.
- It means that English class isn't about books anymore, its about journals, articles and movies.
- It means that the 4million person big city of Atlanta is no more real than a Quake map if you have no car and no clue.
- It means that I can pass classes without verbalizing what I know.
- It means that people can unify under adversity, such as the yearly UGA-Tech football match or militant Islam.
- It means that physics is confined to the physics building and the webassign site.
- It means that there are still class clowns, jocks and stoners.
- Universities mean that we can see things differently than we used to.

## WRITE FOR THE NAR!

You There! NAR needs you! This magazine can't happen without the submissions from students and faculty just like you. Like listening to PBS without being a member, reading this magazine without submitting an article is wrong! WRONG! It's like stealing. You don't strike me as the thieving type, though, so I hope you'll do the right thing.

E-mail your submissions to [nar@gatech.edu](mailto:nar@gatech.edu) or drop them in our box in the post office.

**Write for NAR! Please, do it for the children.**

# Break-up

by  
Andrew Pilsch

A brief moment of clarity descended from Heaven and he set up in bed:

“You know, I don’t love you anymore.”

And just as fast as it had arrived, the clarity was gone.

“What was that?” his lover moaned, speaking through a thick film of tired.

“I said, I don’t love you anymore,” speaking with great clarity, mimicking the spirit of the brief, aberration that had rested, if ever so fleetingly, in his psyche.

“That’s nice dear. Any reasons?”

“No, really, I’m serious. I’m leaving. Now,” the idea to depart their apartment had leapt from his mouth before he really had time to think about it.

“Christ, it’s 7 AM. Can’t this wait until I get up, for real, at noon?” She was becoming more articulate, but her voice still conveyed its discontent at being used at such an ungodly hour.

Kicking off his side of the sheets, he sprang from bed and positively trotted across the room into their shared closet. The sound of hangers rattling and cloth scraping soon emanated from the light of the closet and permeated the formerly still, quiet, gray bedroom.

“What are you doing?” she asked, suddenly concerned.

Getting no response, her tired feet arced out of bed and found the soft, carpeted floor. Still enjoying the gentle embrace of the bed covers and mattress, she turned on the bedside lamp

and brought detail to the darkness-blurred room. Gray walls, gray floors, white ceilings all came into focus as the miniature, artificial sunrise drove the night into the next room.

Forcing herself to rise onto her legs, having assured herself that they were adequately awake, she strode, naked, across the room and the warm light played upon her pale, soft skin, making shadow puppets for no children. Grabbing a robe from a hook on the white bathroom door, she embraced herself in terry-cloth splendor, swiveled on her ankles, and became aware of how glad she was to be barefoot, as no static would be collecting on her frame. Brushing this thought from her still sleep-muddled brain, she re-crossed the small bedroom and leaned, proactively, on the blanched doorframe of the closet.

Staring into the golden glow of the closet, she uttered “come back to bed,” in her most seductive voice, attempting to convey a promise of comfort, warmth, and sex.

“No,” was his reply.

He was piling his clothes into a dark gray suitcase. White sweaters, gray slacks, black polo shirts collected, the detritus of modern life, in the case, part of a rather expensive, his/her matching luggage solution she had given the two of them last Christmas.

He brushed off her question of: “What’s this all about, anyway?”

Straightening himself, he surveyed his suitcase, an accountant, pouring over a ledger making sure nothing is missing but equally a Goth tribesman watching the pyres of some freshly sacked Roman village, taking in a job well done. Picking up the suitcase, he enjoyed its weight. It was heavy enough to remind one that they were bearing a burden but not enough to truly discomfort or, worse, dislocate a shoulder. It was a welcome change.

Brushing past her, he exited the bedroom, past the kitchen alcove, and was halfway passed the overstuffed couches in the living room when:

“At least have some breakfast before you go,” uttered as if she expected him to be back by lunch.

“Just some coffee. No cream, no sugar.”

She was incredulous:

“Are you sure? You hate black coffee.”

“It’s time for a change.”

After the coffee pot had made its distracting, yet oft-misconstrued-as-comforting, racket, she handed him a cup.

Picking up his empty cup, and turning to walk to the gleaming, gray of the kitchen alcove, she stopped:

“What is this about?” She gestured about the room, “Why leave all this?”

“Something was missing here.”

With that, he got up and walked across the dark gray carpet of the living room, out the front door and was gone. Outside, the morning was cold and crisp, and the sky was a beautiful blend of orange, magenta, and blue.



# The Home Game

by  
Grey Eagle

During the Vietnam War when soldiers were hot and sweaty and the bugs were bad, the food was cold and maybe soggy from rain, the beer (if you could get it) was warm and everyone was a little homesick, someone would quip, "Let's make the next one a home game."

The U.S. has had several more "away games" since Vietnam – Desert Storm and Kosovo – plus exhibition games in Grenada, Panama, and Somalia to name just a few, but on September 11, 2001, America opened what promises to be an extended home stand. The War on Terrorism has been thrust upon us, and it promises to be predominantly a home game.

Be careful what you wish for.

There have been many comparisons of the 9/11 assaults with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Perhaps the strongest parallel was the sense of shock and outrage that both catastrophes imbued in the American people. Both acts were attacks on U.S. soil. They were followed by impassioned cries of "Outrage!" and "Revenge!" and a heightened sense of patriotism, but beyond that the similarities begin to blur.

Pearl Harbor thrust America into World War II. President Roosevelt's stirring "Day of Infamy" speech the next day galvanized Congress to declare war on Japan. Present Bush's address to Congress nine days after the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks called the Nation to action but contained no stirring or memorable

rhetoric. There still has been no formal declaration of a state of war, and beyond the initial burst of philanthropy for the victims of 9/11, a slight spike in military enlistments and an upsurge in U.S. flag sales, there has been little evidence of the "roll up our sleeves and get one with it" spirit that swept American in December of 1941.

Most telling in the opening days of the War on Terrorism has been the stunning quiet on American campuses. At a time of great danger to the very fabric of American society when we collectively face grave decisions of life and death, freedom verses security and the underlying hint of a possible return to some form of national service, there has been neither a rush to service, a rising voice of pacifism or the raising of a reasoned debate over the issues and alternatives. What has changed on American campuses since 1941? What are the deeper changes in the foundations of American society itself that inhibit us from getting more involved in a open and ongoing debate on these grave issues? Is there no interest among America's future leaders in trying to shape the future of their Nation and their world or has the cynicism over the current political process completely numbed the activist zeal of their parents on the college campuses of the 60's and 70's?

This is not a nostalgic call for return to the bad old days of forced occupations of university president's offices or of National Guard units on campus to restore (or destroy) order. These are not exactly in the Georgia Tech tradition

anyway; there is no deep history of activism on the North Avenue campus. Still, there is great potential here for positive debate and action to shape the battle and the outcome of what promises to be a grueling and extended struggle.

There has been much change on campuses all across America in the sixty years since Pearl Harbor but even more so at Georgia Tech. We are much more diverse both in the makeup of our community and the breadth of our intellectual pursuits. With the lowering of the voting age to 18, a higher percentage of our student body is eligible to participate in the political process, even with our large number of international students. More important, the issues of how to detect and defend against the threats to our society from the current international terrorism threat – cyberterrorism, bioterrorism, electronic surveillance and intelligence fusion and more — are highly technical in nature – our forte. With its traditional strength in science and technology and its growing prowess in liberal arts, the Georgia Tech student community would seem to be a natural leader of a new generation of Americans to shape our individual and collective destinies in the face of daunting challenges. Why is this not happening?

Perhaps we have been too concerned with the pursuit of money and the good life. Possibly we have become desensitized to the issues surrounding us. Maybe we have lost hope in our ability to influence a cumbersome and unresponsive political system or are too willing to let others make tough decisions for us. Perhaps we feel there is no effective way to express our ideas and learn from the views of others.

This last point is the easiest to remedy and has high potential for influencing other causes of the student indifference to the great issues of our immediate time. There is an effective medium

for all in the Georgia Tech community – students, faculty, alumni and staff – to express ideas, engage in debate and encourage others to positive and collective action, and it is right in front of you. The publication you are reading, the *North Avenue Review*, is just such a medium for discussion and change, and I challenge each member of this community to take advantage of it. I also challenge the NAR editorial staff to guide that debate.

Just what are the issues that face us in our post-9/11 world? Here are just a few suggestions:

**Why is there so little interest in the War on Terrorism on the Georgia Tech campus?**

**What exactly is the nature of the threat that America faces from terrorism?**

**What could or should be done to get the Georgia Tech community more active in combating the terrorist threat in America?**

**What role can and should technology play in the War on Terrorism?**

**How can we balance the need to preserve our personal freedoms against the need for increased surveillance to detect and deter terrorism in the U.S.?**

**How can the United States encourage more technically proficient college graduates to get involved with government efforts to combat terrorism?**

**What role can the Georgia Tech community – particularly the student body – play in encouraging America's young voters to become a more active and informed voice in the future of our Nation?**

## **What are the issues that confront us in the post-9/11 world?**

These are just a few of the topics that could spark a lively and stimulating exchange of ideas in future *NAR* issues with the idea of encouraging greater interest and involvement in the political process among Tech students and future graduates.

There is a chance to make a difference that may have been missed by previous generations. The “Greatest Generation” from World War II gave us the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War generation gave you a world where terrorism threatens our way of life today. What will the 9/11 Generation create for your children in two or three decades?

You need to start now to make a difference in what the future looks like.

I see that difference being made in a community of bright young people committed to not repeating the mistakes of their parents and grandparents, to forming and honing their ideas through publication and exchange with their contemporaries, and working to energize the potential power of 10,000+ young voters here on campus and millions nationwide into a force to shape the world you will inherit.

Do I need to heed my own advice to be careful what I wish for?

*Grey Eagle is a faculty member, Vietnam War veteran and friend of NAR.*

## **Copyright Infringement You Can Dance To: Kid 606’s newest, “The Action-Packed Mentalist Brings You the Fucking Jams”**

by  
Andrew Pilsch

While hunting down a copy of the Rapture’s excellent 12", “House of Jealous Lovers,” I came across a copy of the new record by Kid606, “The Action Packed Mentalist Brings You the Fucking Jams.” It’s 62 minutes of intense dance music that would send ravers and intellectual property lawyers to the ER with similar chest pains.

For those of you who are familiar with bootlegs, the British phenomenon where people

make songs out of other peoples music (think “Genie In a Bottle” sung to the tune of “Hard to Explain” or “Get Ur Freak On” sung to “Faith” and you have an idea), you will have some idea what you are getting into when you drop this in your CD player. For everyone else, let me try to explain what the best moments of “The Action Packed Mentalist” sound like. The album’s high point, “Never Underestimate The Value of a Holler (vipee-pee mix)” starts with Missy Elliot’s “Get Ur Freak On” played over some hyperac-

tive dance beats. Pretty soon, after Kid606 manipulates the phrase “Copy-written, so don’t copy me” until it says “Copy Me” over and over and then becomes static, Jay-Z’s “Big Pimpin’” drops by. A-Ha, Eminem, and Black Sabbath also pops up as the track drives to its conclusion after 14 minutes. All the while, dance rhythms pop up, layer on top of each other, and dissolve.

The reason I purchased this record, though, comes at the beginning of track 7, “This is Not My Statement.” This track is a remix of “Creep” by Radiohead and, as Gavin pointed out when he sold me the record, “I’ll never listen to Radiohead the same way, again. Not that I listen to Radiohead or anything.” There’s something incredibly special and hilarious to hearing Thom Yorke wail about how he wished he were special while a barber shop quartet harmonizes behind me. I get tears in my eyes just thinking about it.

It’s moments like these that make “The Action Packed Mentalist” the most interesting record I’ve heard in quite a while. Unfortunately, there aren’t nearly enough of these moments on this disc. A lot of it can be trying. “Rebel Girl” sucks, as does “Kiddy Needs a New Pair of Laptops” (which is basically some Kylie Minogue song with a few spare beats every now and then). The 8 minutes of static that bookend the disc are further proof of why the skip track button was invented.

For me, “The Action Packed Mentalist” was my first exposure to the world of bootlegs and it’s been fun since then. While it may not pack the same punch as “A Stroke of Genie-Us” or have the same jaw-dropping goodness of “Introspection,” Kid606 proves that all those bastards who used to heckle me with claims that techno wasn’t art because it was made with other peoples’ sound where just full of shit after all. While they may not have the originality or precise musicianship of a Pink Floyd disc, they also make me laugh, which is something. Bootlegs probably serve as our generations answer to garage rock or punk, because it allows anyone, in theory, to make music. The best part about this revolution is that the soundtrack is made from the very music that is being rebelled against, if it is a rebellion at all.

## POWER! INFLUENCE! Election Returns?

by  
Unnamed Political Lackey

There is nothing that a sober college student desires more than power and influence. Some who are stoned or otherwise under the influence may desire such things as aluminum foil or a very large balloon, but that is beside the point. Power and influence are not hard to obtain, in fact there is a thing called an "election" coming up quite soon. People running for elected office have a certain amount of power and influ-

ence, which, believe it or not, they are willing to share with other folk. Now there are two ways to get a share of this power. The first is to contribute money to their campaigns. Since the \$5.16 in your pocket won't be much of a contribution, college students do not have this option. You see, giving money requires having money in the first place, and after the pizza, pot, and hookers have been paid for, there just isn't anything left

for the politicians.

The other way to get a share of the power that politicians have is to vote for them. This seems easy enough, but why does it give you a share of the power? Ah! Good question! The answer is simple, you will vote for the politician who says he is going to do what you would like to see done. Therefore in order to get your vote the politician must promise to do what you would like to see done. Alas!, This does not work for college students because politicians don't listen to college students. This is true and there is a reason for it. The reason lies in the fact that college students don't vote. Whether it is because they are too stoned, have too much work, or just don't give a damn, who knows? They don't vote. Politicians know this and as such they do not tailor their platforms to fit the desires of the 18 - 25 year olds of this nation. That is a pity since the largest group of eligible voters in the country is, Gasp! 18 - 25 year olds.

If all the people in this nation who happen to fall into the 18 - 25 year old age bracket would vote, then politicians would pay a great deal of attention to the desires of that group. Laws would be changed and pork barrel legislation would flow to the things that college age students care about, such as college campuses, cheap public transportation, and clean restrooms. Politicians would perhaps support such ideas as the legalization of marijuana. There it is all you pot heads out there, voting is not such a lame thing to do whilst stoned. In fact it may even be seen as a policy statement.

Lastly, it does not matter to me who you vote for. I of course have my preferences, but that is not the point of this argument. Voting for anyone, Republicans, Democrats, Communists, The Green Party or even Bob for President would be a great improvement on the extremely low number of 18 - 25 year olds that vote at all.

Thank You.

## And There You Have It!

Well, you've just finished reading issue 49 of the North Avenue Review (or, at least, the last page of issue 49). What did you think? Anything make you mad? Anything you liked? Anything you want to say? Well, the great thing about the NAR is that it's a forum. You can discuss things in it. If you don't like something, send it to us. If you want to add to something, send it to us. This magazine is written by the students and faculty (with a lot of help from people on the NAR staff). If you'd like to help keep this magazine great (or improve the quality of it, depending on your point of view), please submit something. You can send your submission to: **[nar@gatech.edu](mailto:nar@gatech.edu)**

Thank You!

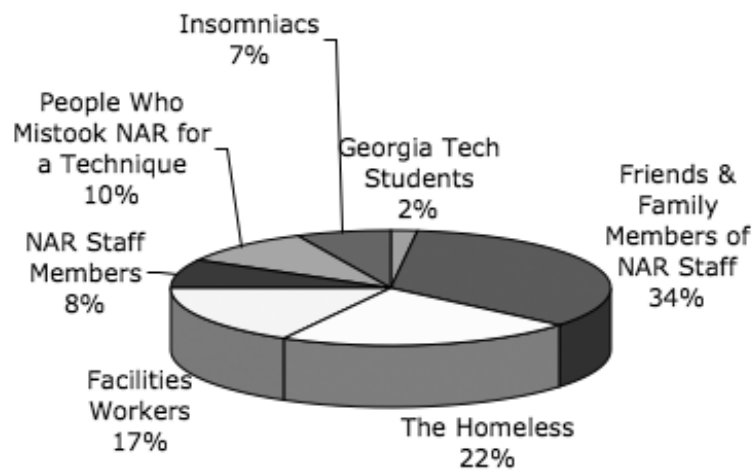
Coming Next Issue In The Pages Of NAR:

# EVIL!

Recently, evil has been the hot topic in America. Think about it: The Axis of Evil, Corporate Evil, your CS 1321 TA, etc. We at NAR are curious to know your thoughts on evil. What is evil? Why is there evil in the world? Why should we care?

It's a wide-open topic and it's your job to fill it in. Send your thoughts on evil to [nar@gatech.edu](mailto:nar@gatech.edu) or you can drop your piece in hard copy form in our box in the post office.

# BREAKDOWN OF NAR READERSHIP:



**The North Avenue Review**

issue 49