

Best Advertising Design

“Mobility Designs”

Casie Clark

The Liberty, Berkmar High School



Judge's Comments:

- Creative with the name of the company -- working the handicap symbol in as the “O” in mobility.
- Nice use of space with information -- very clean and clear
- Bold line anchors the ad good.
- Try not to go all the way to the edges with information about the company and product.

Best Caption Writing

Matt Westmoreland

The Southerner, Grady High School



DON'T SAY I TOLD YOU SEW: Seniors Dan Dinh, Elise Henderson , junior Samuel Williams, and seniors Maria Finch-Hammond design their own clothing in fashion design. Their clothing will be displayed to the school during the second annual fashion show this March.

Judge's Comments:

Clever use of kicker leading into cutline. Captions were clear -- explaining the W's -- and not obvious. Second sentence added a little bit more depth to caption. Everything in present tense.

Best Column

Elly Bookman

The Southerner, Grady High School

Americans plagued by procrastination



ELLY BOOKMAN

It was inevitable that I be bitter on election night. Mostly because I had to sit on my couch and watch the results pour in, knowing that I'd had no say in the eventual election of the leader who would have a great effect on my future. It also hurt because my 18th birthday fell just 27 days after the fact, meaning it all rested in the hands of America's eligible voters.

By the next morning, hope for the candidate I supported was waning quickly enough so that before lunch time, he had conceded the victory to the incumbent. The bitterness stayed, but was joined by another emotion: fear.

Fear because America's people, who once made up a country that emphasized the right to demand change, chose to extend one of the most disastrous presidential administrations in history. Fear because they found it in themselves to forgive the largest budget deficit ever and a war that continues to claim lives for reasons that have since been proven false. But mostly, there was fear because the stereotypical stupidity of Americans had been victorious.

Most of us have always ignored the idea that modern conveniences like television and the Internet are dumbing us down. We trust ourselves enough not to believe that we could be influenced by pure entertainment, and in fact this is a logical assessment. It is not the content of our entertainment that brings us down, although shows like *My Big Fat Obnoxious Boss* are hardly intelligence builders. Instead, the ridiculous accessibility of such pastimes has led us to put off caring about the problems our nation faces.

It's so simple, after all, to turn on the television after a long day and settle down for a mindless melodrama. As technology continues to improve, it's becoming easier to let our decisions be dictated by pure entertainment. We've forgotten that anything worth caring about takes a little work. Americans have turned to the age-old malediction that is procrastination.

We procrastinate until the issues are narrowed down to the simplest questions, like life or death. Republicans stand ready to pounce, first convincing us that our lives are in danger and then that they are the only ones fit to keep us safe. They take the offensive, hoping to present a violent, no-tolerance front to protect against terrorists, rather than wondering why they'd want to attack us in the first place. And because we've become so prone to the easy way out, the majority of our nation chooses to truck along behind them.

By the time a person makes this decision, other less provocative issues don't compare. The debates over the watering down of civil liberties in the Patriot Act, or the tax cuts that aid the rich rather than the poor, have passed. Moral issues were blown enough out of proportion that people with conservative tendencies were signed onto the Right side. All the Left can do is point endlessly to the same facts, yet disturbingly, Americans don't care if they've been lied to.

It's all so easy nowadays that we've come to believe decisions should be that way too. We receive entertainment in our households with the touch of a button and can connect with people the world over in much the same way. But this convenience should not have seeped into our democratic process the way it has.

Americans have let themselves be talked down to, then acted on it, and are still too tuned-out to listen. □

Judge's Comments:

Well written and insightful. You could have a great future in journalism.

Best Commentary/ Op-Ed Column

Christie Tarleton

The Prowler, Union Grove High School

Through shades of pink...

Students learn better in a diverse environment

By Christine
Tarleton
Editor in Chief



Whoa...wait a minute.

Before everybody gets too upset about UGA's recent statement concerning the possibility of using diversity as a factor in admissions decisions, maybe students should explore the compelling reasons as to why UGA came to such a decision. It is probably not what many might think.

College life, contrary to popular belief, is not intended to be a succession of football games and frat parties followed by a sheet of paper stating that one has completed his or her degree. A university is responsible for seeing that its students are prepared to integrate successfully into today's workplace and society. Due to

technology, society is increasingly being defined on a global scale, and it is not realistic to assume that one can go through life without interacting with other cultures. In response, UGA believes that it has an obligation to expose its students "to a robust exchange of ideas within a student body representing the greatest possible variety of backgrounds."

Such a learning environment benefits everyone involved, not just minorities. Through interacting with people who think differently from oneself, students are able to learn tolerance and appreciation for other cultures. While not tested on any graduate school entrance exam, UGA believes that these skills are vital enough to the success of its students to consider such factors as racial, geographic, linguistic, and experiential diversity in its admissions process.

Even if UGA were to implement such a policy, it would only be used if all of the applicants involved were of the same academic merit. If all of the applicants are equal, why shouldn't UGA use diversity as a factor at this point in the admissions process instead of just choosing blindly between equally qualified applicants if a diverse mix of students benefits the whole university?

By using diversity in the admissions process, UGA is doing what is in the best interest of all of its students by preparing them for today's society. It is not a conspiracy generated by liberals to punish white males for their past injustice to minority groups. Instead, it is a way to choose from extremely close candidates in order to benefit students.

UGA does not owe it to anyone to accept him/her, but it is

free to choose from a pool of applicants based solely on factors that it believes will benefit the students who will attend the university. It does use quotas or any other unconstitutional methods to achieve diversity, meaning that it is clearly within in the bounds of the US Constitution.

In fact, many historically black colleges use scholarship money to attract whites from as far away as Russia in order to increase diversity. The admissions director at North Carolina A&T University, Lee Young, believes that because boardrooms are not all black, the classroom shouldn't be either.

To declare UGA's attempts at diversifying its campus as unfair to white males is unreasonable. Realize that the world is not out to get white males. If all else fails, maybe they should just attend a historically black university instead; they are looking for diversity too.

Judge's Comments:

Solid arguments and good writing. Miss Tarleton made a strong effort to make a case for the position she was taking. This is what separated her from most of her peers. It's easy to express your opinions but much harder to defend them.

Best Critical Review

“Josh Hartnett’s Eyebrows Fight Hitchcock”

Wesley Wingo

Blue & Gold, Chamblee High School

Josh Hartnett’s eyebrows fight Hitchcock

Challenger: *Wicker Park*

by Wesley Wingo

It’s awfully hard to take notes in a darkened theater, but straining your eyes to the point of not being able to see is a lot more interesting than watching Paul McGuigan’s atrocious movie about love pentagons and cell phones, *Wicker Park*.

Josh Hartnett plays a psycho-stalker/heartthrob who runs all over town looking for some old girlfriend of his who left him for no apparent reason despite the fact he’s practically engaged to a perfectly hot, not to mention rich, other woman. Meanwhile, this other chick tries to replace his old flame. This doesn’t really matter much, though, because she’s crazy too. Turns out that every single crazy character in the movie is intertwined one way or another with another crazy character through love or infatuation.

The first problem with this film is that the viewer can’t decide whether or not Hartnett’s character is supposed to be a friendly Casanova or a crazy, psychopathic miscreant with a penchant for breaking into single women’s apartments. Deciphering his character is made harder by Hartnett’s four-point range on facial expressions: confused, nervous, disappointed, and philosophical. All of them are laughable and marked by eyebrow contortions.

So for the first half of the movie, when Hartnett is in “stalk-mode,” he breaks into hotel rooms and apartments looking for clues as to what happened to his woman. This Blue’s-Clues hunt goes on for a terrible hour and is complemented by painfully inane editing.

Oh, yeah, and every time a girl catches Hartnett in her apartment, she immediately wants to sleep with him. That’s realism for you.

Just when I’m thinking, “All right Paul McGuigan, something’s needed to break up this boring stalk-o-thon,” he answers

with flashbacks. The narrative is told completely out of order with gross overuse of flashbacks in order to distract from the weak story. The result is this: a viewer sits through the movie not knowing what is going on half the time and doesn’t care enough about the other half to figure it out.

Even if McGuigan had figured out how to tell the story right, the story isn’t worth telling. It’s a mush of inconsequence and coincidence acted out by a bunch of crazies as they plot-twist their way across the screen.

Nothing very important hangs in the balance. The biggest conflict in the movie is between Josh Hartnett’s eyebrows as they battle for space on his forehead. The entire movie is driven by people talking on cell phones and what story is left over from the free night and weekend minutes is dominated by a bunch of selfish characters that ruin other people’s lives. Even the contrived, happy ending can’t cover up the all the pain.

It’s a long movie. A loong movie.

The only redeeming value is the total babeness of Hartnett’s two girlfriends. And you can go to the website for free.

Defending Champion: *Vertigo*

by Wesley Wingo

Why watch a bad movie like *Wicker Park* that is supposedly “in the Hitchcockian tradition” when you can go rent one made by God himself: Alfred Hitchcock.

Pick up his ’58 classic *Vertigo* and you are ready for a night of awesomely cool creep.

Hitchcock’s exploration of abnormal psychology

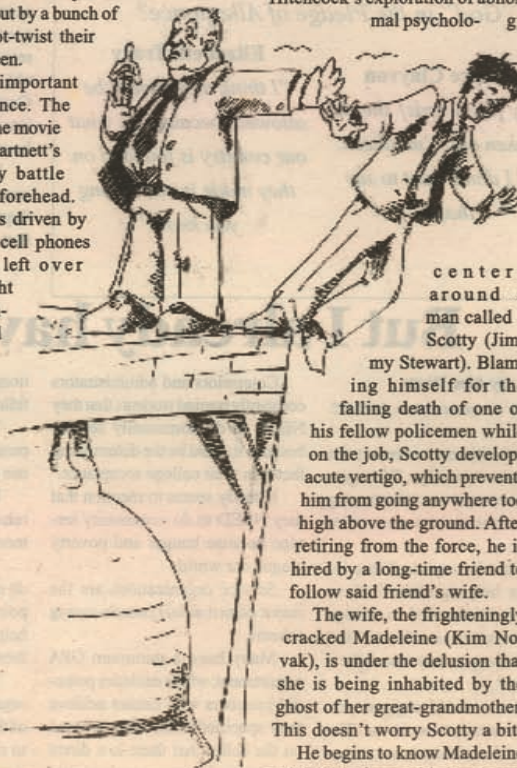


Illustration by Chad Bennett

centers around a man called Scotty (Jimmy Stewart). Blaming himself for the falling death of one of his fellow policemen while on the job, Scotty develops acute vertigo, which prevents him from going anywhere too high above the ground. After retiring from the force, he is hired by a long-time friend to follow said friend’s wife.

The wife, the frighteningly cracked Madeleine (Kim Novak), is under the delusion that she is being inhabited by the ghost of her great-grandmother. This doesn’t worry Scotty a bit.

He begins to know Madeleine and falls in love with her (sexy, mysterious, and dangerous, who

wouldn’t?), but as Scotty investigates the bizarre case further, he has to come to grips with his past, his guilt, his vertigo, and the fact that there is a much larger and deeper mystery than he thinks.

No one can beat Jimmy Stewart at the peak of his game. He plays the role well and manifests Scotty’s inner demons with flair. He takes on an incredibly creepy persona as he tries to deal with the loss of his short-lived love with Madeleine.

Finding another woman who reminds him of Madeleine, he tries to turn this new woman into his old love, forcing her to buy specific dresses and dye her hair platinum blonde. Eerie.

Kim Novak pulls off a sexy, sultry, and incredibly scary Madeleine who will turn on the guys and unsettle everyone. Plus she’s a super-fox.

The writing is brilliant and inspires goose bumps. Every exchange has meaning and every witticism is well delivered. The screenplay sets up a wonderful mystery that engages the viewer in predicting the conclusion. The best part though, is that no matter how much you think about it, there is no way to predict the wild turns the characters take through this film to the ultimate, hair-raising conclusion. The plot is intricate without deliberately trying to confuse you and the ending is thoroughly satisfying.

To round out this classic, beautiful cinematography and creative shots lead us through Hitchcock’s San Francisco thriller. Scotty’s animated dream, breathtaking shots of the Golden Gate Bridge, the chiaroscuro (use of light and dark) in Ernie’s restaurant, and the 360 degree pan around Scotty and his “new Madeleine” are particularly vivid.

This film doesn’t disappoint. Plus, it’s even better the second time. That’s right, it’s worth watching twice.

Judge’s Comments:

In both reviews, the writer supports his opening statement throughout the piece with a well-structured and conversational critique. Most importantly, though, we hear the writer’s individual voice, and he should be encouraged to continue to develop it.