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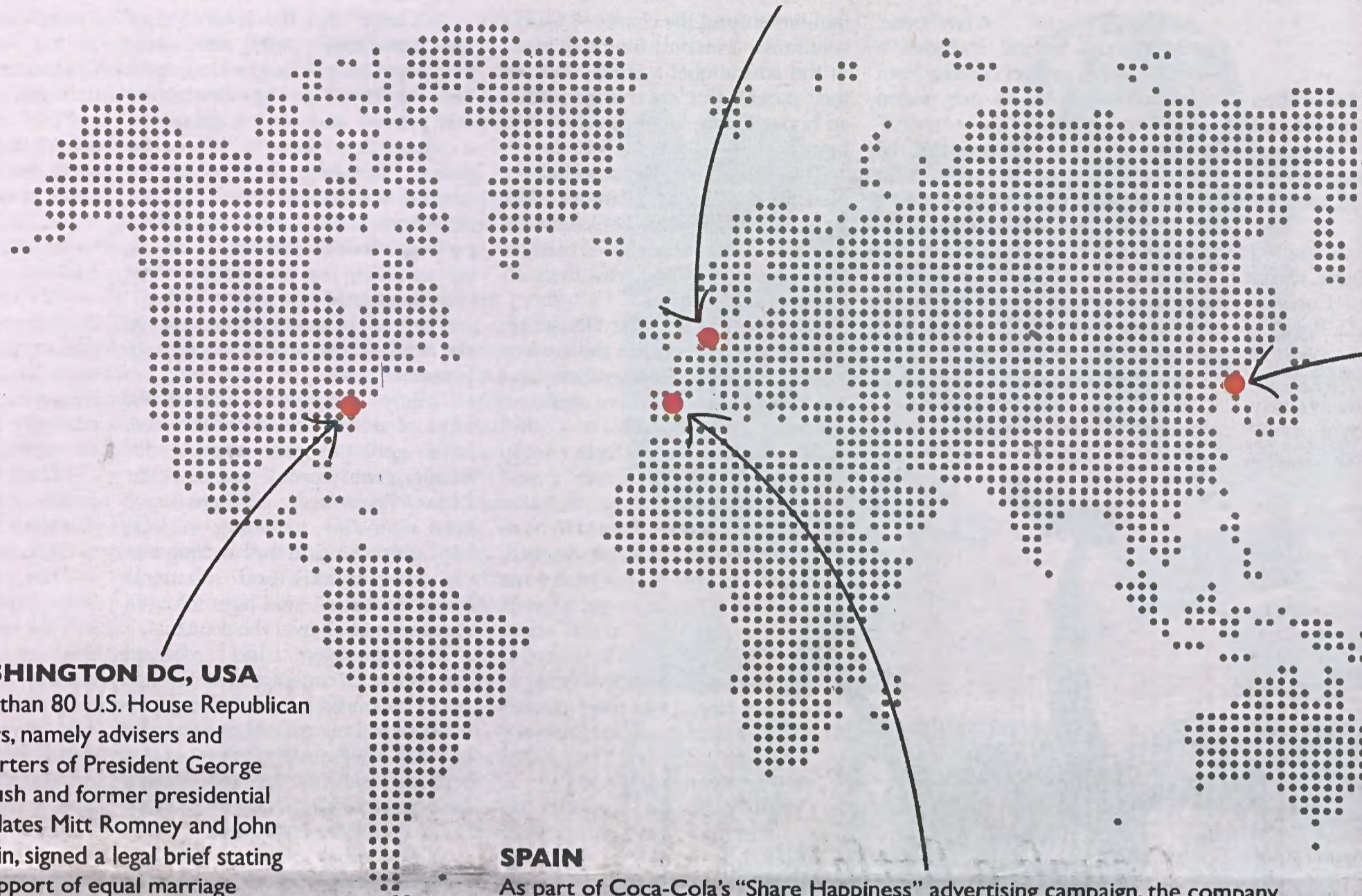


AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

The minimum age for legal prostitution in Amsterdam is set to rise from 18 to 21 years. Mayor Eberhard van der Laan said the reform is intended to regulate business and protect the 8,000 women working as prostitutes in the city from crime. Additional change includes closing the time frame for prostitution between the hours of 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

NORTH KOREA

Foreigners visiting North Korea were able to post their first-ever tweets and Instagram pictures online this week via mobile phone, thanks to the newly instated 3G network. The authoritarian Korean government now allows mobile Internet access for visitors using North Korean SIM cards; however, citizens are not permitted to access the Internet in any capacity.



WASHINGTON DC, USA

More than 80 U.S. House Republican leaders, namely advisers and supporters of President George W. Bush and former presidential candidates Mitt Romney and John McCain, signed a legal brief stating full support of equal marriage rights for gays. The brief was created in response to the National Organization for Marriage's recent dismissal of gay rights and was formally filed Thursday.

SPAIN

As part of Coca-Cola's "Share Happiness" advertising campaign, the company installed ATMs that dispense free money throughout Spain. Recognizing the country is amidst a recession, Coca-Cola has attached only one stipulation to the instant funds: they must be shared. The machine offers suggestions for the recipient to "pay it forward" through good deeds, but distributes 100 euros per user without confirmation that the money will in fact be shared.

Paralympian Pistorius kills girlfriend in South Africa

PROSECUTION SAYS MURDER,
PISTORIUS SAYS BURGLAR BREAK-IN

BY RISHAB REVANKAR
STAFF WRITER

Pretoria, South Africa. Feb. 14, 3:20 in the morning: legendary Paralympian Oscar Pistorius shot and killed celebrity-model girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. The prosecution alleges it was murder in cold blood, but Pistorius and his defense attorneys claim it was a tragic accident.

"We are still trying to come to terms with everything," South Africa Chair of Athletes and Olympic medalist for South Africa Geraldine Pillay told The Guilfordian. "It's a shock."

Pistorius, who had both legs amputated before the age of one, competes in events for amputees and able-bodied runners.

Last summer, he became the first double-leg amputee to participate in the Olympics, where he reached the 400-meter dash semi-finals.

On Feb. 22, after spending one week in jail, Pistorius was assigned a bail of \$113,000 and posted it shortly thereafter. His trial date is set for June 4, 2013.

"Obviously Reeva Steenkamp is no longer here, and Pistorius' whole world has been turned upside down," said Guilford Head Track & Field Coach Danny Cash. "It's a huge thing the country is going to have to deal with now."

Pistorius admitted to firing four gunshots through a locked bathroom door with his silver Taurus 9mm pistol. Three of the four shots hit Steenkamp, piercing her head, hip and arm. Pistorius broke down the locked door with a cricket bat and carried Steenkamp to the hallway of his residence where paramedics later pronounced her dead.

Claiming that he mistook the "suspicious noise in the bathroom" for a burglar breaking in, Pistorius maintains that he fired in fear of losing his own life.

If his account of the story proves true, his decision to shoot would seem justified to some.

"In South Africa, it's a different lifestyle," said sophomore Byron Hamilton, a native of South Africa. "If you own a gun and aren't prepared to shoot to kill, it's more likely that a perpetrator will use your own gun against you."

Prosecutors have formally charged Pistorius with premeditated murder, but his guilt remains undetermined.

Primary concerns about Pistorius include his history of violent tendencies, reports of late-night shouting matches between him and his girlfriend, and Steenkamp's unexplained locking of the bathroom door on the night of her murder.

"If she didn't feel fearful, why would she lock the bathroom?" asked Assistant Professor of Justice and Policy Studies Sanjay Marwah. "Why would a burglar lock the bathroom? It seems high unlikely ... a flimsy argument."

"I know he's driven, he's passionate and he speaks well — all of those things," Vice President of Athletics South Africa and winner of the 2004 New York Marathon Hendrick Ramaala told The Guilfordian. "But 'the Oscar (Pistorius)' at home? I'm not sure,"

Pillay first met Pistorius during the 2004 Olympics in Athens.

"He was definitely the golden boy across all borders," said Pillay. "He bought a car last year worth 3.5 million rand, or \$395,346, and that was a newspaper headline. He went with his girlfriend to the Seychelles on a vacation — it was a TV program. Whatever he did was always in the spotlight."

The spotlight might have been overwhelming for Pistorius, who was deemed "too intense" by some.

"Being ostracized and being elitist, there's a fine line," said Guilford Assistant Track & Field Coach Kimberly Cash. "If he had so much pressure on him, did it lead to violent tendencies?"

At Guilford, coaches Danny and Kimberly Cash aim to build strong athletes and citizens of the community.

"We spend a lot of time guiding our athletes through service and volunteering, and hopefully they can understand that it's more than just themselves as an athlete," said Danny. "It's about being part of the community."

The behavior of Guilford's athletes contrasts those professional athletes who stare down the barrel of legal controversies.

"You worry that people will start losing hope in athletes and their abilities," said Pillay. "First it was Tiger Woods, then Lance Armstrong and now Oscar Pistorius."

"I know South Africa, just like the rest of the world, is bleeding," concluded Pillay. "They're hanging on to a little bit of hope that this is not true."

The question remains: what were Pistorius's intentions when he pulled the trigger on Valentine's Day?