

Opinions

Americans must stop gazing inward, look at world events

By Rebecca Clark
Pilot editor

Six years ago I came to the United States from Alberta, Canada. The 3,000 miles I traveled from my home brought me to the South, a place radically different from what I had grown up with. I was unaccustomed to the red earth, the drawn-out syllables and the mild winters of North Carolina.

Now, six years later, as a dual citizen of the two countries, I find

myself putting down roots, building a niche and feeling very distanced from our neighbor to the north. So distanced in fact, that Canadian news is far removed from me.

If you are to scan the news headlines, the word "Canada" rarely appears. How many people know that Canada has provinces, not states, and that we have a prime minister,

not a president? Perhaps, due to its low impact in world events, there is no need

for Americans to know about their next-door neighbor. Perhaps, like the fabled Atlantis, it could sink into the ocean and we would not know of it until far into the future.

And it's not just Canada that could disappear off the map unnoticed. What is going on with the protests in Myanmar? What progress is being made in Afghanistan? What is happening to the people of Darfur? China? Greece?

Can we, as Americans, even point them out on a map? Or like

Ms. Teen South Carolina will we be unable to even answer why we know so little about world events?

Sometimes, it seems that celebrity news takes precedence over genocides, war and natural disasters in other countries.

Sensational news is the latest scoop. We want to know what trouble Paris Hilton has gotten herself into (or out of) and the results of Britney's drug test or latest rehab attempt.

As Americans, and especially

as colleges students, we need to be aware of the larger world around us. Ethnocentrism gives a narrow view of the world that limits the individual, the community and the country.

Often, the media seems to feed us a diet of sugar; there is not much meat to the news, and we too willingly consume it. We need to be informed and open to events that are taking place outside of the boundaries of the United States and we need to start reading "real" news.

Collegian editorial sparks a national uproar with four-letter word

By Aaron Hedge
Rocky Mountain Collegian
(Colorado State University)

(UWIRE) - After a Friday editorial on page four in the Collegian that said "Taser this ... F--- BUSH" sparked national uproar and controversy regarding free speech, Editor in Chief J. David McSwane will go before CSU's Board of Student Communications today to defend his job. The expletive was spelled out about twice the size of a normal headline.

The board has authority sanctioned by the Board of Governors of the CSU System to fire the editor in chief.

McSwane and the Collegian Editorial Board are standing by the decision.

"The Editorial Board felt very strongly that its time college students, especially CSU students, start talking about issues," he said. "We're zealots for freedom of speech and we felt that after Andrew Meyers on the University of Florida campus was pulled from his mic and abused ... that we started getting people to talk."

But he added that the board didn't realize the full consequences of the decision.

"There were some unintended consequences," he said. "I think we've caused a lot of grief to the advisors and we've certainly affected our own advertising."

An undisclosed amount of Collegian advertising money has been lost since the editorial was printed.

McSwane said that the editorial wasn't about the president, but about freedom of speech.

"I think it's been blown a little bit out of proportion, it's been turned into more of a political issue," he said. "Historically our 'Our Views' are not in favor of President Bush. Very often we slam him on that same section, so the issue wasn't what we said, it was how we said it. To us, it was a free speech issue."

The Collegian will not be suspended by the university.

CSU President Larry Penley issued a statement regarding the editorial that said while the university doesn't have the authority to halt printing of the publication, it expects deeper

journalistic integrity from its student journalists and does not support the editorial.

"While student journalists enjoy all the privileges and protections of the First Amendment, they must also accept full responsibility for the choices they make," Penley said in the statement.

One CSU teacher expressed his support for the Collegian's choice with a word of caution.

"I would support the paper no matter what it said," said local attorney and journalism instructor Lee Christian. "But I fear that it is going to lose some integrity among the community."

Christian applauded the Collegian editorial board for taking the initiative to

start such controversy in an industry that he said has become less bold than it should be.

"It shows that he (McSwane) has got guts," he said. "I don't know that the mainstream media is doing what's necessary to promote freedom of speech."

He said some other publications refuse to spell the "f" word out because they fear social ramifications.

"This shows what power that word has when newspapers are afraid to print it."

One CSU student called into question the sincerity of the Collegian's editorial decisions, mentioning a mistake in a news story several weeks ago.

"The first article, when they used 's---' got more attention than it should have

and to print something like this makes me wonder if they are really sorry for the first article," said Jessica Petrisak, a biological science freshman.

But McSwane says that is a completely different issue as a hard news story.

But others students support the editorial board's actions.

"My opinion is that they should say whatever ... they want to say," said Matthew Johnson, an open option freshman.

CSU College Republicans issued a written request Saturday for McSwane to resign his position.

The group will hold a petition signing in the Plaza asking for McSwane's resignation Monday.

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Hollywood lacks true originality

By Christopher Shaver
Pilot staff writer

Hollywood has given the people quality entertainment for years, but it seems as if everyone is remaking good movies.

Films such as "Halloween," "3:10 to Yuma" and "The 300 Spartans" have all been recreated. This leaves me wondering if producers have succumbed to creative plagiarism.

Now, before I get any hate mail, I understand there have been good remakes of movies. "Ocean's 11" was a wonderful remake, but I still believe that the creative juices have quit flowing with many writers and producers.

It's interesting to see people flock to see the latest teen flick, when they can rent the same story at Blockbuster for half the price. Although there have been a few original works, "Porky's" and "Animal House" are still being rehashed into films such as "Superbad."

The worst scenarios don't all necessarily come from remakes, but from bad sequels and prequels. Take the last "Die Hard" movie, for example. Over the summer, I

watched a 52-year-old-man jump from a jet onto a blown-up highway without breaking a bone. After a grunt and a bloody knee, he continued to do the stunts we have seen in other action films. We got the point with the first two "Die Hard" movies.

Producers jump to prequels after the stories can no longer advance, the actor dies or he/she decides the last movie was good enough.

George Lucas has shown the world you can still have a story when there really isn't a good one to tell. The last three "Star Wars" films showed only how technology has changed over the 20 years since the first one came out.

Also, viewers learned that Yoda was once like Gandhi on steroids, and that there are actually worse actors than Keanu Reeves.

Movies like these make me wonder if my future children will see these run-of-the-mill movies as great pieces of art because of the poor stuff they'll be fed in 20 years. Hopefully by then, producers will find that a good story carries the movie and it's not about recreating the moments we found in the original versions.

Wisdom on Wheels Let's prove Appalachian State wrong

By Jacob Conley
Pilot staff writer

There is one thing that I never thought I would write about in this column, but it seems that the football fans on campus need an attitude adjustment.

They have no faith in our football team. This is sad, especially considering that this is a Baptist campus, the one place you would think faith would abound.

I am talking specifically about the upcoming game with Appalachian State. When I tell people that I have faith that we can win, they laugh.

Why? Because the Mountaineers beat Michigan. That win is becoming less and less impressive because Michigan is a bad team.

The mood on GWU's campus is vastly different than the App State's before it played Michigan. People waited in line for 24 hours to buy tickets.

Why? Because App State students had faith in their team.

We GWU students don't. All I hear from students on campus is, "Beat App? You're crazy."

We have written off our team as losers before it steps on the field. The players don't sweat and work in practice every day to go and lose on the field. They go through it to win and they believe that it will happen - and we should, too.

In the words of George Michael, "You gotta have faith."

If you still have doubts, here's an illustration of what faith can do. In the 1800s a small Western town was in the middle of a severe drought, so the town's people decided to meet and pray for rain. Only one kid brought an umbrella, and he

is the only one who did not get wet.

That is the kind of faith we should have. It may take a miracle to beat App State, but we should expect nothing less.

Along with faith, we should feel disrespected and a little angry at App State. The GWU game is played on its homecoming weekend. App State thinks it is a guaranteed win because GWU is the worst team on the schedule.

Lenoir Rhyne is also on the Mountaineers schedule. That means App State thinks that a Division II school will give them a tougher game than we will and, to me, that is the ultimate slap in face.

Let's use this disrespect to our advantage. Tickets to the game are on sale now. We need to show up in force and show App State that our team and our fans can't be pushed around.

Don't forget your umbrella.



Conley

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