

## The Pendulum

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### A demonstration in demonstration

Burn a flag. Defile the Constitution. Walk out of class. Join a protest. These are sentiments that are a continuous part of the national debate.

Many people complain that any demonstration against American political institutions is un-American. Those individuals that participate in defiance of are labeled "dissenters" and cast aside. But maybe the constitutional right to demonstrate is American.

Recently a basketball player at a small college in New York has received national media coverage for something she's been doing all season. Each time the National Anthem is played at a Manhattanville College, Toni Smith has turned away in silent protest of American foreign policy. Numerous fans have criticized her protest, one veteran actually came out of the stands to lecture her. It is that fan that is grossly un-American.

How can we live in American and declare protesting wrong? Is it not a birth right of all Americans? Protesting is the most primitive form of democracy and has catalyzed change in many countries throughout history. The French Revolution started due to protesting by the common citizens.

Perhaps the movie "The American President" puts it best when President Andrew Shepherd says, "The symbol of your country cannot just be a flag. The symbol also has to be one of its citizens exercising his right to burn that flag in protest. Now show me that, defend that, celebrate that in your classrooms. Then you can stand up and sing about the land of the free."

## The Pendulum

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Each individual is entitled to one free copy.

## U.S. should be heavily involved in North Korea peace process

The situation in North Korea is just another cry for help from a country that has finally decided to open its doors to capitalism after years of economic isolation and tension with neighboring countries.

The latest to come out of the Korean peninsula was an assertion to turn any attempt by the U.S. to use force again, their country, North Korea would use nuclear weapons, according to Monday's USA Today.

It's all talk. North Korea is more about gaining favorable trade agreements and economic boons from its neighbors in the south Pacific, the U.S. and Europe to assert their presence in the region.

What better way to get the world's attention than to cry wolf by calling attention to the building up of a nuclear arsenal?

Who says that, anyway?

Even Saddam Hussein pulled the wool over the U.N. by hiding mobile weapons centers around the Iraqi desert.

Not to say North Korea should not be handled seriously but everything from expelling weapons inspectors to acquiring weapons grade plutonium to testing short-range missiles in waters next to



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neighboring nations is mere façade aiming for the recognition of the international community as a power for the bolstering of their economy and nation as a whole.

The Bush administration is handling this issue right. Handle with care and search for a diplomatic solution, bringing as many countries to the table as well to open talks and bolster relations.

Iraq is still the main issue at large in U.S. foreign policy and should take priority.

North Koreans is a country searching for an identity as they are in the midst of a power transition with newly elected President Roh Moo-Hyun.

Last week the North Koreans conducted a short-range missile test, according to Tuesday's New York Times.

The missiles landed harmlessly

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into the water between Korea and Japan, according to the Times report.

Instead of letting North Korea turn into a diversion from the task at hand of Iraq and their struggle to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions to disarm, the only solution to pacify the North Koreans is to string them along.

Open up direct diplomatic relations, not just with the U.S. but European nations as well.

The U.S. should play a role in the peaceful resolution of any conflict on the Korean peninsula but the major players should be Korea's neighbors to the south, with China and Japan as the major powers in the region.

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