

## Reflections on journalism following the Bryan incident

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Poe writes, "There are some secrets which do not permit themselves to be told ... Now and then, alas, the conscience of man takes up a burden so heavy in horror that it can be thrown down only into the grave. And thus the essence of all crime is undivulged."

Shortly after midnight on Jan. 20, something happened. I know this. I also know that this community is reeling from an "incident." It is an "incident" because no word better prevents me from committing libel; I know no more stable ground.

I am a journalist. As such, I hold sacred a certain intuition about the future and the past. The past is certain; it is at least knowable if not known. It is what I report. The future is unstable, unknowable, to be reported. This is how it was supposed to go.

I feel, instead, that I have been asleep, that this intuition was always a dream. On Jan. 20, I woke up to a phone call describing a maelstrom the

night before, of baseball bats and comas, melee combat of mythic proportions, a clash of cultures.

The project of "Truth" is to proceed backwards through all this. It is a search for origins, and witnesses, "what happened" and wherefore. But our world falls too fast for muck-rakers. I blinked, and Truth had shattered, its parts crystallized, refracting the past violently and in all directions.

"We have known freedom's price," said President Bush as he closed his address on Jan. 23. "We have shown freedom's power. And in this great conflict, my fellow Americans, we will see freedom's victory." A certainty of what is yet to come, and then the local FOX station turned our attention to Guilford. Their pivotal source was a student who claimed to have seen the incident.

"It was crazy," he said to FOX, and nothing more. At least it was a fact.

The ravishing onslaught of corporate media attention helped to ensure that any seamless portrait of Truth would

dissolve. In its place has arisen a mosaic of forceful and agenda-laden "truths." And we are all responsible for this — those of us who have shouted, who have whispered, who have said nothing at all.

Institutional administrators, athletes, white anti-racists, and anti-racists of color (and of course those hybrid anti-racists who are also administrators), now police the boundaries of their tiles, their truths on this mosaic — in open forums, closed meetings, public statements, leaked letters and unauthorized fliers. The future is guaranteed and the past is made to serve it.

Activists, Guilford's cherished Mercenaries to the Good, cry out again for "change" (but for how long); and they know what change means because they know what happened.

The administration, of course, has declared Guilford's "allegiance to the truth." They have promised, "The integrity of (the judicial process) will result in justice." And they know that this will happen because their truth is neatly compiled



DAN KATZMAN/GUILFORDIAN

A REPORTER INTERVIEWS JUNIOR JEREMY BANTE ABOUT THE COMMUNITY RESPONSE BEFORE AN OPEN FORUM ON JAN. 24.

in a stack of witness statements and medical reports, none of which mentions the War on Terror.

What will the historian of the future write about the incident on our campus? Will the "altercation in Bryan Hall" be a footnote, the xenophobic by-product of an endless criminal war? Or will it be a shining example of the triumph of "ratio-

nal, inclusive discourse" and "due process"? It depends on what he wants to prove, I suppose.

Politics everywhere. Everywhere politics. And I am a journalist. I report. I am a journalist, a historian of the present if you will. As such, I am compromised, because, unlike so many others it seems, I don't know what will happen tomorrow.



THE REALITY OF GRAFFITI

BRETT McDONOUGH

## Music spreads 'the Gay'

NASI EASTON | SENIOR WRITER

In all the Internet's endless wisdom and plethora of helpful knowledge, a few Web sites really stand out. Google, for example, helps even the least tech-savvy person to surf the World Wide Web with a single click. YouTube allows the humblest among us to become a virtual video star in mere instants. And, most importantly, LoveGodsWay.org enlightens anyone and everyone about the danger of listening to bands that spread "the Gay."

Yes, "the Gay." Before stumbling upon this Web site, I had no idea that homosexuality was a virus, something akin to the flu that, if caught early enough, can be properly treated and cured. Nor was I aware that this virus doesn't even require person-to-person contact to spread — it's so contagious, apparently, that even listening to suggestions of it is enough to contaminate the naïve heterosexual.

Now, thanks to this Web site, I can finally consider myself well informed. No longer am I in the dark about the truth behind the lyrics of the "really gay" Elton John or "dark gay" Marilyn Manson. Nevermore will I be lulled to sleep by Frank Sinatra's romantic melodies or Sufjan Stevens' haunting songs about "Psalms" — oh no! I'm not letting my sexuality's guard down for an instant.

I'm so impressed by this utterly unbiased, obviously objective list, in fact, that I feel the need to follow suit and enlighten the world with an equally reasonable list of my own: Bands who spread the Red.

Through my years of careful listening and perusing of many music libraries, I have created a list of artists that, through either their lyrics or actions, clearly show they are commies. Watch out for these bands, parents, as you never know when your little one may give up his or her J.K. Rowling in favor of Karl Marx and go Red. As with "the Gay," the Commie may be stopped if caught early enough, but once it's too late ... there's no turning back.

Bands to watch out for:

— *Gnarls Barkley*. That music video for "Crazy" may have looked like just a bunch of strange inkblots to the unaware, but some of us saw it for what it truly was — subliminal messages urging listeners towards Marxist ways. A clever tactic on Gnarls' behalf, but I saw through their ambiguity to the clear, Red message underneath.

— *The Dixie Chicks*. This should be obvious. They have expressed their distaste for the Bush administration — need I say more? Anti-Bush, pro-Commie ... they're practically synonymous.

— *Anti-Flag*. As if their name isn't enough, they have an entire song based around equality. Equal portions for all? Equal chances for everyone? Does any of this sound familiar to you? Well, if you know anything about anything, it should sound exactly like what it means: "we love communism."

— *Red Hot Chili Peppers*. Yet another band with a song about equality — and it even says the word "red" twice! Come on, people, do I have to spell this out for you?

— *Dave Matthews Band*. Yes, even this seemingly sweet, gentle man has communist ties. "And all the little ants are marching, red and black antennas waving"? Don't be fooled by his soft exterior. Dave Matthews is a true Red through and through.

Now, before you get all up in arms over your favorite band being included in this list, think it through logically. And while you're giving yourself a thorough headache attempting that, at least entertain the notion that perhaps my list isn't as far-fetched as it seems. It's certainly not any more far-fetched than the idea that certain bands encourage homosexuality — or, I'm sorry, "the Gay" — through their lyrics and music.

LoveGodsWay.org is right. In this age of rampant piracy and audio-based viruses, it's crucial to keep watch over what music you and your loved ones listen to. After all, you never know — that song you previously considered innocent may actually be designed to push you into the ranks of the latest group of victims in our fair land.